

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2015

SOUTH AFRICA

PLAYBOY

SHORTCUT
BY BOBBY
JORDAN

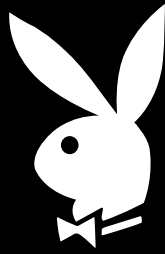
SOFT SEDUCTRESS

ROMANOVA

DOUBLE
PLAYMATES

20Q
LIZZY CAPLAN

COMEDY, SEX,
ENTERTAINMENT,
ADVICE, FICTION
& MOTORING



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SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2015

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PLAYBILL

tHIS Month'S HIGHLIGHTS

Welcome to yet another Bumper Issue of PLAYBOY South Africa, where we scout the globe for beautiful women, scan the horizons for cutting-edge lifestyle content, and mine the depths for great journalism and compelling fiction.

To celebrate the unfurling of springtime in our hemisphere, we bring you the soft seduction of **cover model, Heidi Romanova**. This luscious lady hails from Latvia and was discovered by our Austrian photographer, Martin Wieland. Her pictorial, shot in Martin's "back yard," is **romantic and oh, soooo sensual**.

Since this issue spans two months, we've got to keep you riveted and coming back for more and we think we've accomplished that goal with our two stunning Playmates, **Aleksa Slusarchi** (Miss September) and Ashleigh Hannah (Miss October). Ukrainian Aleksa will captivate you with her mysterious eyes and **taut, tantalizing shape**. Photographed by John Zelezny, a regular contributor to PLAYBOY South Africa, Aleksa's heat simply steams off the page.

Meanwhile, we are delighted to begin cementing a relationship with our newest photographer, Cassandra Keyes, who introduced us to the naturally gorgeous Australian, **Ashleigh Hannah**. Ashleigh's pictorial is likely to **leave you breathless**, and she'll charm the socks (and everything else) off you should you ever have the chance to meet her in person. Do not break the law, though, as you may have to face her in court: Ashleigh's in her final year of law school and is ready to fight for justice. Yes, she's more than just a pretty face.

There are plenty of more pictorials too, like the **playful** Asphalt Jungle series featuring American Playmates **Jaslyn Ome, Audrey Allen and Gemma Lee Farrell** carving up an LA skate pit or the spectacular **tribute to Breaking Bad** put together by **Aleš Bravničar** during a trip down Route 66.

Meanwhile, you'll find that *Masters of Sex* star, **Lizzy Caplan**, who plays Virginia Johnson, is also not bad to look at, but we could only score a **20 Question** interview with her. She's fearless and funny and talks about how far we've come since William Masters helped usher in the sexual revolution.

Another extremely attractive woman who has an interesting story to tell is **Tula**, the controversial Bond girl who became the **first transgender model** to bare all in PLAYBOY, almost a quarter century ago. Shane Michael Singh conducted an exclusive interview with her just before Bruce Jenner came out as Caitlyn.

But we're not just about the women, are we? We like to dress for women and perform for women too, which is why we have a six-page fashion feature on the most **stylish suits for Spring**, modelled by none other than iconoclast, **Father John Misty** (aka Josh Tillman). And the fascinating tale of **Irish boxer John Joe Nevin**. If you like a good story, you should also check out our **local fiction writer, Bobby Jordan's** "Shortcut" – which was selected for the Short.Sharp.Stories 2015 anthology, *Incredible Journey*.

As always, we've got motoring, cocktails, food, style, tech as well as our regular jokes, advisor and so much more.

We do hope you notice the new look and feel of this issue. **Thanks to the magic touch** of one of our most respected local designers, Emil Papp, who we have looked forward for many moons to collaborating with again. We are thrilled to have him on board.

Enjoy the read.





PLAYBOY

MORE THAN

JUST A

CENTERFOLD





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WORLD *of*

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NIGHTLIFE NOTES



ED'S CHOICE OF KENSINGTON LEA

Kensington Lea, Miss May 2015

In case you missed your favorite Playmate's pictorial, you can now see some of our Ed's picks from her shoot on our website just by registering as a free member at www.playboy.co.za. Or, you can always go get a back copy of her digital issue at:

MySubs www.bit.ly/YEbgkw or
Zinio www.bit.ly/GQ78VD



KHLOË: BTS ON THE BEACH

Look who's channeling Anna Nicole Smith, it's the one-and-only Khloë Terese (our PMOY 2014) modeling for the 138 Water Ravish Sands Swimwear Billboard Campaign. We can't wait to see which image they choose for the final ad.



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PLAYBOY



A KNOCKOUT

"It was cool to get messages from people all over the world saying, 'I saw you on TV,'" says Miss September 2012 Alana Campos of being a ring girl for May's "Fight of the Century" between Manny Pacquiao and Floyd Mayweather. Tapped by Tecate, the Brazilian babe was one of

only four ring girls at the epic punch-out, which became the most-watched PPV event of all time. "We had to be ready by 5:00am every day for interviews," says Alana. "Manny is a humble man, and I was rooting for him, but both guys were polite. It was a fantastic honor to be part of it."

BEAUTIES & THE BEASTS

The second PLAYBOY Sessions concert proved to be a monster of an event. A throng of Playmates including Ashley Doris, Angel Boris, Brittany Brousseau, Stephanie Branton and Val Keil showed up at the Beverly Hills HQ and took the stage to

back up performance artists-rockers PPL MVR. Dressed in Yeti-style suits, PPL MVR screamed and stomped through a hair-raising set. To see the crazy for yourself - and find out if the Playmates were able to tame the beasts - visit www.Playboy.com.



Playboy

PAST and PRESENT

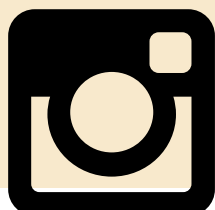
PLAYBOY has been known for memorable cover art ever since Hef printed that iconic first issue featuring Marilyn Monroe in 1953. This year, the Society of Publication Designers honored the American PLAYBOY team with a gold medal in cover photography for the 60th anniversary edition. The pictorial *The Immaculate Kate Moss* also picked up gold - reason enough to keep PLAYBOY on your coffee table.



DO YOU FOLLOW US ON INSTAGRAM?

We're starting to have some fun on Instagram. Come and play.

www.instagram.com/playboymagsa



DO YOU FOLLOW US ON TWITTER?

We're starting to have some fun on twitter. Come and play.

www.twitter.com/PlayboyMagSA

Top Story

In collaboration with action-figure maker Blitzway, PLAYBOY asked seven artists to design a line of art toys, now available at www.coartism.com.



AFTER HOURS

BECOMING ATTRACTION

Nosheen Phoenix

"I WANT TO break the rules of what it means to be hot and sexy and a badass," says actress Nosheen Phoenix. On HBO's dark political comedy *The Brink*, Nosheen plays a frisky Urdu interpreter to Tim Robbins's Secretary of State. Indeed, the London native cites her conservative upbringing by Pakistani parents as fueling her rebellious fire. "We live in a time when you can finally express yourself, even if you're naked. I hope to inspire others who come from backgrounds where they've been told they can't do something," she says. "I'm here to make a difference." ♫





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SOFT SEDUCTION

PHOTOGRAPHY BY MARTIN WIELAND





Heidi Romanova. Ahem. This is not the Heidi of the Swiss Alps with the cutie-pie chuckle and giggle. This is the Romanova Heidi – as seriously sexy as a Siberian winter night. As seriously sexy as an intercontinental ballistic missile. As seriously sexy as what a Volkswagen Beetle Cabriolet painted in dull chocolate colour will ever look.

Photographer Martin Wieland ran into 20 year old model Heidi while in Austria, quite the distance from Riga, where she grew up. Run Martin, run, and bump into beauties like this again, please.





PHOTOGRAPHY: Martin Wieland / www.martinwieland.at
MAKE-UP ARTIST: Sandra Brix
WARDROBE: Zeitlos



















GO NUTS

THERE'S MORE TO THE TRENDY TROPICAL INGREDIENT THAN COCONUT WATER

While coconut water is a fine hangover treatment and a decent natural sports drink, let us not forget the other uses of this fruit that's trending in certain culinary subcultures. The paleos like it for its hunter-gatherer origins, and the Ayurvedic crowd touts its healing powers, but we love it for its versatile, umami-rich, fatty yum factor. Here are three satisfying ways to crack the coconut code that don't feel a bit like dieting.



FOOD STYLING BY BIRTE VON KAMPEN. PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAN SÄELINGER

THREE CRAZY-EASY COCONUT RECIPES

1.

Szechuan Coconut Shrimp

Combine ½ cup shredded coconut, ½ cup bread crumbs and 1 teaspoon ground Szechuan peppercorns in a bowl. In another bowl, beat 2 eggs. Dip shrimp in eggs, then in coconut mixture. In a medium pan, fry shrimp in ½ cup 375-degree vegetable oil until brown on each side.

2.

Coconut Collins Cocktail

In a tall glass filled with ice, combine 2 ounces gin, ½ ounce freshly squeezed lime juice, ½ ounce agave syrup (made with equal parts water and agave nectar) and 4 ounces raw coconut water. Top with sparkling water and garnish with lime wedge.

3.

Coconut Rum Ice Cream

Combine two 13-ounce cans full-fat coconut milk, 1½ cups sugar, 2 tablespoons dark rum and ¼ teaspoon vanilla extract in a blender. Pour into a large metal bowl and put in freezer. Whisk every 30 minutes until creamy and frozen.

DAIQUIRI REWIND

THE RUM COCKTAIL IS REVIVED
BY THE MIXOLOGY REVOLUTION

If there's such a thing as a mixology lesson in a glass, it's the classic daiquiri. In its ideal form it's simply potent rum, tart lime, a little simple syrup to balance the two and ice to chill it down. While Technicolor machine-made frozen margaritas destroyed the drink's rep for a couple of decades, it's now being reclaimed by skilled bartenders who consider it a cocktail with cred. Think of it as the springtime equivalent of the old-fashioned: an unimpeachably awesome vintage drink that's making a comeback. Here's how it began, lost its way and became better than ever.

A Daiquiri Done Right

Some recipes add grapefruit and maraschino juice, but try this stripped-down version first.

INGREDIENTS DIRECTIONS

- | | |
|--|--|
| • 2 oz. carta blanca (white) rum | Combine ingredients in a cocktail shaker with ice, shake vigorously for 10 seconds, then strain into a cocktail glass. |
| • 1 oz. freshly squeezed lime juice $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. simple syrup | |



1930s

The Hemingway Days

➤ Ernest "Papa" Hemingway was introduced to the daiquiri (said to have been invented in Cuba by American miner Jennings Cox) at

Havana's Floridita bar. Hemingway liked his double strength, earning the cocktail the nickname *papa doble*.



1970s

The Dark Ages

➤ The sheer preponderance of frozen-drink machines, spring-break culture, crappy rum, artificial food coloring and general poor taste all contributed to the

daiquiri becoming a symbol of good times gone bad. Smart men rightly stayed away from it. Stupid men, and the drink's reputation, paid the price.

The Renaissance

➤ Bartenders tired of 17-ingredient mixology realized if they used damn fine rum, fresh lime and perfect ice, they'd have a drink that's tough to beat. And now the frozen daiquiri is

coming back thanks to tiki bars, such as the USA's Three Dots and a Dash, which serves a fresh banana daiquiri made with three rums and garnished with a dolphin-banana.



2010s

RUM & RUMMER

• A classic daiquiri is made with *carta blanca*, a.k.a. white rum. **Havana Club** (1) You have to go to Cuba to get a daiquiri made with this legendary rum embargoed stateside. **Caña Brava** (2) This *carta blanca* upgrade from the 86 Co has become the gold standard for American bartenders. **Flor de Caña** (3) An affordable, reliable and widely available bottling from Nicaragua.



THE ONE THING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT
COLOGNES IS THAT YOU ACTUALLY NEED TWO

NIGHT



1 Rock Solid

A magnetic mix of bergamot, wood and black pepper, Issey Miyake Nuit D'Issey can be worn anywhere a leather jacket can.

2 Rock Solid

Carolina Herrera 212 VIP Men is a cocktail of vodka, mint and ginger. Spray before a night on the town.

3 Rock Solid

For date night at a Michelin hot spot, use Jimmy Choo Man, an elegant union of lavender, pink pepper and melon.

4 Rock Solid

The black-tie-ready Givenchy Gentlemen Only Intense has notes of cedar, leather and tonka bean. Find the right occasion.

DAY

Knowing how to dress for the occasion is essential - and wearing the right cologne is no exception, especially in spring, when longer days and warmer nights revive social calendars. For this reason, you need two colognes: one for day, one for night. Thankfully, designers give cues to guide you. Fragrances in bright or flashy bottles often work best when the sun is up, while words such as *nuit* and *intense* denote an after-hours scent. Here's what (and when) to spritz this spring.



1 Rock Solid

The sweet intermingling of patchouli and rose in Maison Francis Kurkdjian Lumière Noire is ideal for champagne brunches.

2 Rock Solid

The zest of lime and green leaves in Lacoste Live befits the man who crushes CrossFit before his morning cup of coffee.

3 Rock Solid

Subtle and citrusy, Nautica Aqua Rush Gold is perfect for dining alfresco, on land or at sea.

4 Rock Solid

Fossil 1954 for Men is a vintage-inspired aroma of cardamom and sage, understated enough for the office.



LOW-DOWN



SMALL SUVS TAKE OFF-ROADING TO UNEXPLORED TERRITORY

Off-roading is as much about brains as about brute strength, and the latest move in SUVs proves it.

The **Land Rover Discovery Sport** is a compact SUV that uses a punchy, turbocharged

in-line four and the company's time-proven Terrain Response system to make mincemeat of mud and rock. We drove one through a raging Icelandic creek to test the truck's claimed wading depth of 23.6 inches. The Discovery Sport can even

accommodate seven people thanks to an optional 5+2 flexible seating system that, when laid flat, delivers a load floor as long as that of a Range Rover. — William K Gock.

GO DIRTY



GET OUTTA TOWN!

LAND ROVER INSTRUCTOR BOB BURNS'S FAVORITE OFF-ROAD SPOTS IN THE USA

Sierra Nevada

→ "The Western mountains have incredibly beautiful, remote areas, including standard destinations such as the Rubicon and Fordyce Creek trails."

The Southwest

→ "From Moab to Grand Staircase, the Southwest has such variety in untouched terrain. You get a great feeling of isolation here. Use the Four Corners as a starting point."

Anywhere, Colorado

→ "There are really no bad areas for off-roading in the entire state of Colorado. And it's rich in American history."



A red Jeep Renegade is shown from a front-three-quarter view, driving through a rocky, off-road terrain. The vehicle is splashing through water, with water droplets visible in the air around it. The driver is visible through the windshield. The background consists of dry, brushy hills under a clear blue sky.

The new **Jeep Renegade** is a budget-friendly little hauler with personality. Though not as rugged as the battle-ready Jeep Wrangler, the Renegade is surprisingly tough, especially in Trailhawk trim, which includes eight inches of ground clearance and 19 inches of water fording. The Renegade manages decent

gas mileage, pulling 24 mpg from the 2.4-liter engine (though four-wheel drive may test that), while the interior is a rolling tribute to off-roading, down to the map of Moab in the center storage bin. Its size and power are built to tough it out in tight spaces. ♪

...eight inches of ground clearance...

TOUGH TERRAIN

...nineteen inches of water fording...

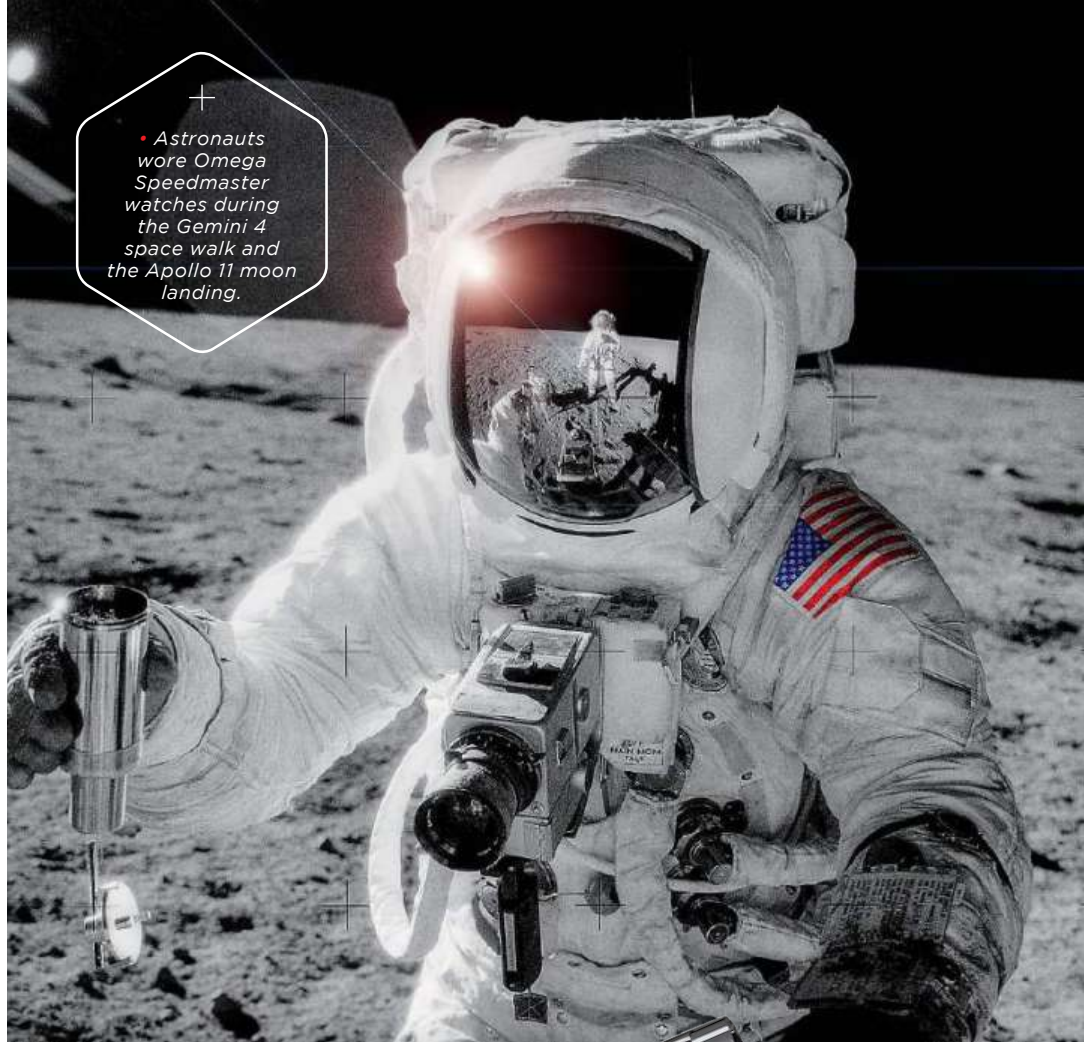
SPACE FOR CREDIT ON MOTORING

Vincent Boucher

SPACE TIME

THE TOP THREE HIGH-END
WATCHES FOR STYLISH CIVILIAN
SPACE EXPLORERS

With space tourism firmly in sight, it's no wonder the coolest new wristwatches take their styling schemes and tech specs from the idea of journeys to galaxies far, far away. This arm hardware rockets into your world with aerodynamic contours in featherweight titanium or ceramics. Solar-powered, self-illuminating and GPS-guided, these babies bring timekeeping into the 21st century. In the 1960s and 1970s, Omega watches accompanied American astronauts on their historic NASA missions, and spaceman style resonated with dapper civilians of the era, including singer Serge Gainsbourg. Bring one into your orbit.



INTERSTELLAR STYLE



1. Deep Space Time

→ The Pilot Professional 5241, from the Space Series Luminox developed for the SXC/XCOR commercial space liner, features both an analog dial for checking time at a glance and a digital display for more exacting maneuvers.

• infinity.catalog.com

2. Dark Star

→ The legendary Omega Speedmaster goes badass in the all-black Moonwatch Co-Axial chronograph with 18-karat white-gold hands. It's powered by Omega's self-winding Co-Axial 9300 movement for precision and stability.

• omega.watches.com

3. Globe-Trotter

→ Synchronizing with satellite navigation signals, Citizen's titanium Satellite Wave-Air promises accurate time wherever you are. The proprietary Eco-Drive runs the watch's low-power signal-reception system from any light source, eliminating the need for batteries.

• citizen.watch.com



MIND GAMES

A NEW BATCH OF APPS CLAIM TO MAKE YOU SMARTER, BUT ARE THEY TRAINING OR DRAINING YOUR BRAINPOWER?

Forget biceps – brains are the muscle to train these days. The basis for exercising your mind comes from the concept of plasticity, meaning the brain at any age can modify itself in response to being stimulated. Tech companies have already jumped in with mobile games that promise to enhance your cognitive abilities. But do they work? Although they won't boost your IQ to genius proportions, some experts agree there is evidence that the right kind of mental stimulation can improve cognitive functions.

"I tell people they have to train and not strain the brain," says Dr Gary Small of the Semel Institute for Neuroscience and Human Behavior. "Do things that are fun

and engaging – not too difficult, not too easy." Memory games, he says, help build up fluid intelligence and short-term memory.

Three of the most popular apps – Fit Brains, Lumosity and Elevate – all claim that using them will improve

MANY OF THESE GAMES ARE MAKING YOU BETTER AT ONLY ONE THING – PLAYING THE GAME.

your performance of real-life tasks. Fit Brains (iOS, Android, online) aims to make "dry neuroscientific activity engaging," says co-founder Mark

Baxter. The in-game tasks ask you to match pairs of shapes or identify objects by their shadows, but the basic goal is to develop skills such as hand-eye coordination and reaction speed – handy during your next pickup game of basketball. Lumosity (iOS, Android, online) exercises core cognitive abilities such as memory, attention and pattern recognition, which can help you remember the names of people in a business meeting. Elevate, Apple's app of the year for 2014 (also available

on Android), focuses on communication proficiency with games that improve reading comprehension, grammar and vocabulary. (Know what else does that? Reading a book.) All three apps are free, but premium subscriptions, with prices ranging from R40.99 a month to R1,000 a year, give you access to more games.

"We're at a stage where the foundation for brain training is strong," says Dr Adam Gazzaley, director of the Neuroscience Imaging Center at the University of California,

San Francisco. "But the evidence of what it does, how it works, dosage, side effects – all those details need a lot more research." Gazzaley believes the complexity of these games can benefit how our brains function, but ultimately the success of brain training depends on collaboration between scientists and game developers. Likewise, as Small points out, not all games are created equal. Many of them are making you better at only one thing – playing the game. ♣

ALL ABOUT THAT BASS

→ The first wave of wireless speakers pumped out sound quality that was on par with a pair of earbuds stuffed inside a coffee can. Enter the Megaboom by Ultimate Ears (www.ultimateears.com), which kicks out 360-degree sound with the best bass thump we've heard in a Bluetooth speaker. For full party

approval, the cylindrical case is shock- and waterproof to protect the 20-hour battery inside. To really get loud, use the Ultimate Ears app to link two Megaboom speakers, and let everyone in the neighborhood know you celebrate the entire Lil Wayne catalog.

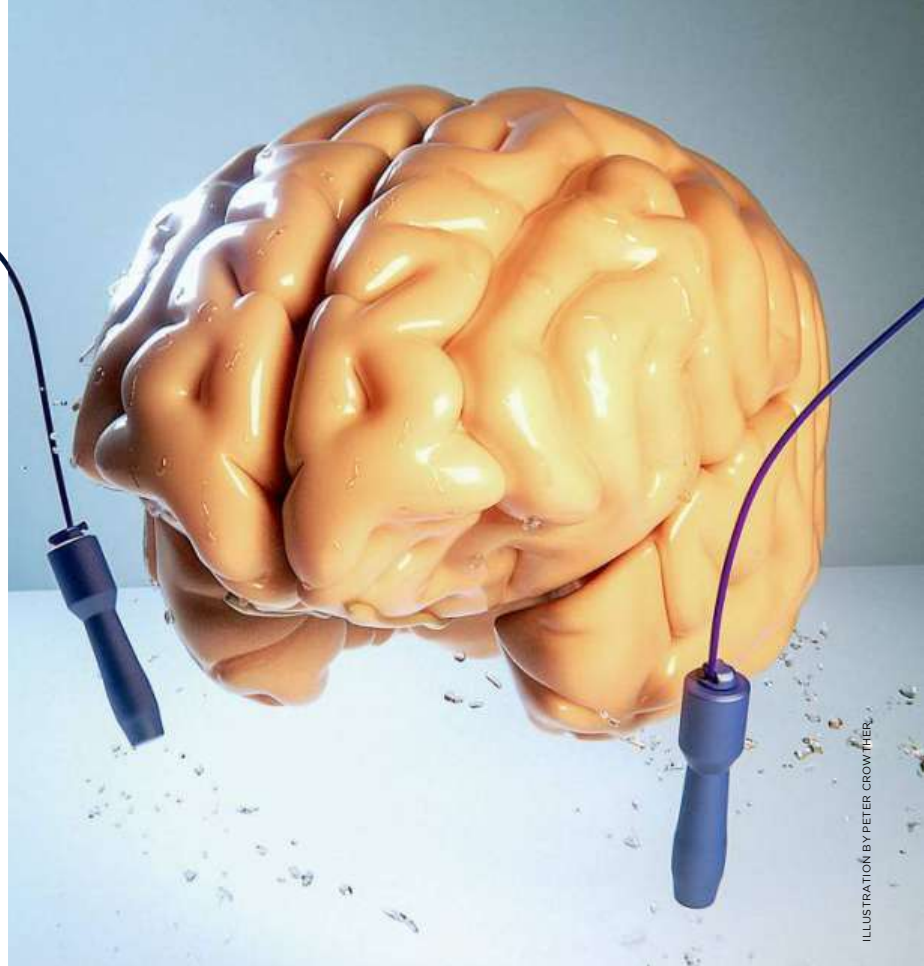


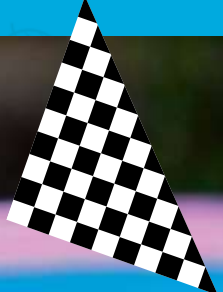
ILLUSTRATION BY PETER CROW THER





ASPHA

Jungle



PHOTOGRAPHY BY
SASHA EISENMAN

LT



**LET THREE PLAYMATES ROLL INTO
YOUR DREAMS IN THIS SULTRY, SUNNY
CALIFORNIA SKATE-PARK FANTASY**





See the action

Watch Jaslyn Ome, Audrey Allen and Gemma Lee Farrell carve up an LA skate pit. See more online at Playboy Plus: <http://bit.ly/1IHMMjd>











AHEAD OF *Her* TIME

An exclusive interview with *Tula*, the controversial woman who became the first transgender model to bare all in PLAYBOY, almost a quarter century ago

BY SHANE MICHAEL SINGH

PHOTOGRAPHY BY RICHARD FEGLEY

Before Bruce Jenner sat down with Diane Sawyer, before Laverne Cox earned an Emmy nod for *Orange Is the New Black* and before President Barack Obama appointed the first transgender woman to a senior government position, there was Tula. A striking six-foot-tall British model whose face graced magazine covers and popped up in national ad campaigns for vodka and lingerie in the 1970s, Caroline “Tula” Cossey never yearned to be more than a working model and, someday, a wife. But when her enormous success as a model backfired into public hysteria, she had decisions to make. She could stand and fight, or she could run away. She chose to fight. In the wake of it all, Tula would become the first of many things, much to her surprise.

In June 1981, Tula debuted as a Bond girl in *For Your Eyes Only*. To promote the film, she, along with the film’s other Bond girls, appeared in a PLAYBOY pictorial, images from which appear in these pages.

Tula’s career was soaring. Life was good. But everything changed the following year. The British tabloid *News of the World* revealed Tula’s secret in a single headline: JAMES BOND GIRL WAS A BOY.

Indeed, Tula came into the world as Barry Cossey. She knew she was different from the beginning – a woman born in a man’s body. In 1974, after years of hormone therapy and counseling as

well as a breast augmentation, she completed her transition with gender-reassignment surgery at a London hospital.

The tabloid’s revelation in 1982 turned her into a media sensation. She became known as the “transsexual Bond girl.” People around

the world – some naive, some ill-willed and many flat-out confused – wanted to know her story. So she decided to tell it, to own it and become a poised, albeit reluctant, leader in educating the world about an ignored, misunderstood and often-maligned minority.

Over the next decade, Tula would pen two memoirs, battle the British government to change her gender on her birth certificate and talk about her transition on programs including *The Howard Stern Show* and *The Arsenio Hall Show*. She would also marry a wealthy businessman, who deserted her mere days after their honeymoon. As a beautiful woman at the forefront of a sociosexual-rights struggle, Tula approached PLAYBOY and asked to pose for the magazine. We signed on. In September 1991, she became the first transgender woman to appear in these pages in her

own pictorial. The pictorial reignited a media firestorm. *Hard Copy*, for example, played Tom Jones’s “She’s a Lady” and Tower of Power’s “You’re Still a Young Man” as a lead-in to an interview with her. By 1993, Tula had disappeared from the public eye.

At a time when the transgender community is experiencing a historical and cultural turning point in acceptance, exposure and



Tula as Barry Cossey, born in a tiny Norfolk, England village.





WHEN I WENT THROUGH THE
PROCESS, ONE OF THE DOCUMENTS
YOU HAVE TO PRODUCE IS

*a birth
certificate.*

MY HEART SANK.



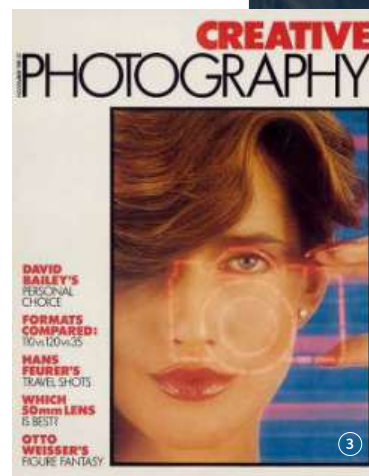
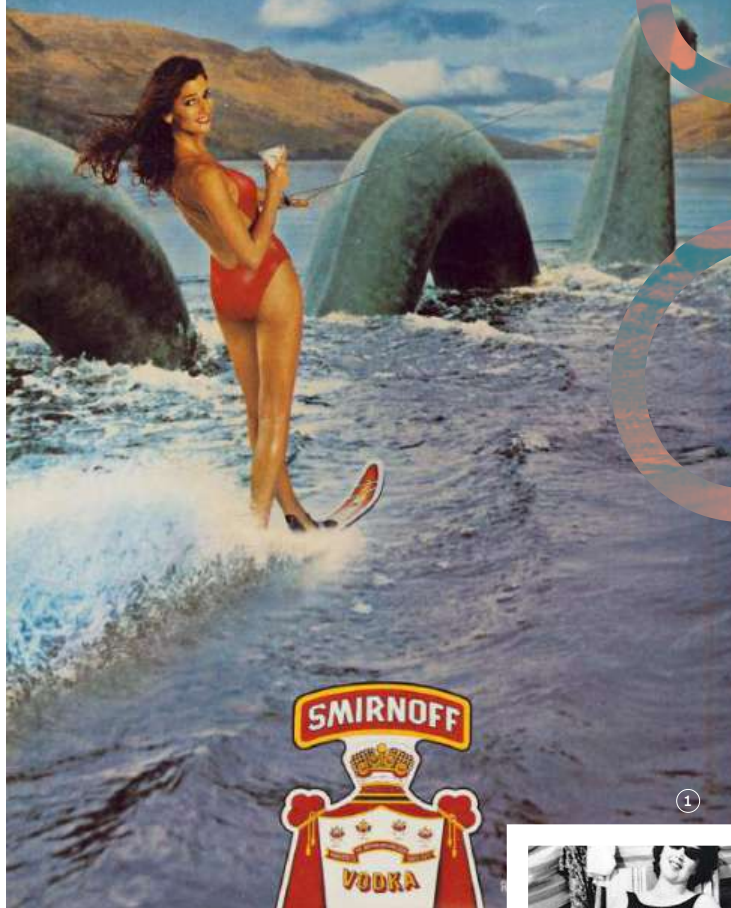
FEATURE

I'M NEVER GOING TO BE
ashamed of
something

I HAD NO CONTROL OVER, BUT I
DON'T WANT TO WALK AROUND
WITH IT WRITTEN ON MY
FOREHEAD.



"Well, they said anything could happen."



understanding, PLAYBOY wanted to know what had happened to the groundbreaking model-author-activist. We found Tula, now 60, living a quiet married life in suburban Atlanta as Caroline Cossey, having ditched the pseudonym she adopted as a model. Coincidentally, she was in the process of converting her best-selling memoir, *My Story*, into an e-book for a summer release. In her first interview in 20 years, the Bond girl speaks candidly on a range of topics, from life after PLAYBOY to Bruce Jenner to her own public persecution. As she says of the changing attitudes toward the trans community, "I feel like I was probably so many years too early."

PLAYBOY: Was your retirement from public life voluntary or forced?

COSSEY: My career had definitely taken a turn. I was being offered only trans roles on shows like *Hill Street Blues*. I thought, No, that's not right. I didn't like it. There's a difference between being known as Tula the transsexual international model versus just a successful model. It wasn't the same. I felt like a circus act. I was also on a tour for my second book, doing eight interviews a day. It became overwhelming, and I got burnt out. Two, three years into it I worried about my sanity. I wanted quiet. I wanted peace of mind

and to fall back into society in a more regular manner as a loving and supportive wife. For that reason, I became reclusive for an awfully long time.

PLAYBOY: How long have you been married?

COSSEY: This year is our 23rd anniversary. My husband is Canadian, and we got married in a church in Montreal. My birth certificate still said I was male, but they overlooked it when we got married, so it wasn't a problem. I'm enjoying my life right now in Atlanta. We have a little home here and a place in Florida on the beach. My sister is in America, as is my mom, and we spend as much time together as a family as possible.

PLAYBOY: It's surprising you would choose to retire in the heart of the Bible Belt.

COSSEY: When I first moved here, I'd tell people, and they'd be shocked. They'd say,

1. Cossey's modeling career included this ad for Smirnoff, which ran before she was outed. 2. An outtake from PLAYBOY's 1981 *For Your Eyes Only* shoot with Roger Moore. Cossey stands at far left. 3. As Tula, Cossey was a cover girl in high demand. 4. Cossey married Elias Fattal in 1989; the marriage was annulled weeks later. 5. Cossey as a 10-year-old boy on vacation with family.

“Oh my God, you’ll wake up to dead animals on your front lawn!” But everyone has always given me the greatest respect. I’ve never had any major problems. One time I did have a fan who got a little touchy. He followed me into the bathroom and kind of grabbed me, telling me I was wonderful. That freaked me out. But that was the only situation. Actually, former mayor Maynard Jackson gave me honorary citizenship to the city, though he later rescinded it, saying “I wouldn’t have given it to somebody whose claim to fame was being transsexual.” That was an insult. *[laughs]*

PLAYBOY: Did you give it back?

COSSEY: I did offer, but he didn’t take it back. I still have it on my wall.

PLAYBOY: Your birth certificate still identified you as male when you got married. You had waged a costly eight-year fight with the European Court of Human Rights in the 1980s for the right to change your gender on the document. You won the case initially, but the British government appealed, and you lost on the appeal. It wasn’t until 2004 that Parliament passed the Gender Recognition Act, which allows transgender people to change their legal gender. Did you have issues living in the US as a woman with a certificate that identified you as male?

COSSEY: I got US citizenship 14 years ago. When I went through the process, one of the documents you have to produce is a birth certificate. My heart sank. I asked if I could use something else, said that I had lost it, but they said no. When I produced it, I looked at the lady and gave her my birth certificate, my name-change form and my letter from a surgeon confirming my 1974 surgery. She said, “Okay, fine.” And that was it. I expected her to leave the room and come back with a load of people behind her, but no. It was amazing. It was actually harder for my husband to get citizenship as a Canadian. *[laughs]* My birth certificate has since been changed, but it was a similar feeling when I applied for a gun license.

PLAYBOY: You own a gun?

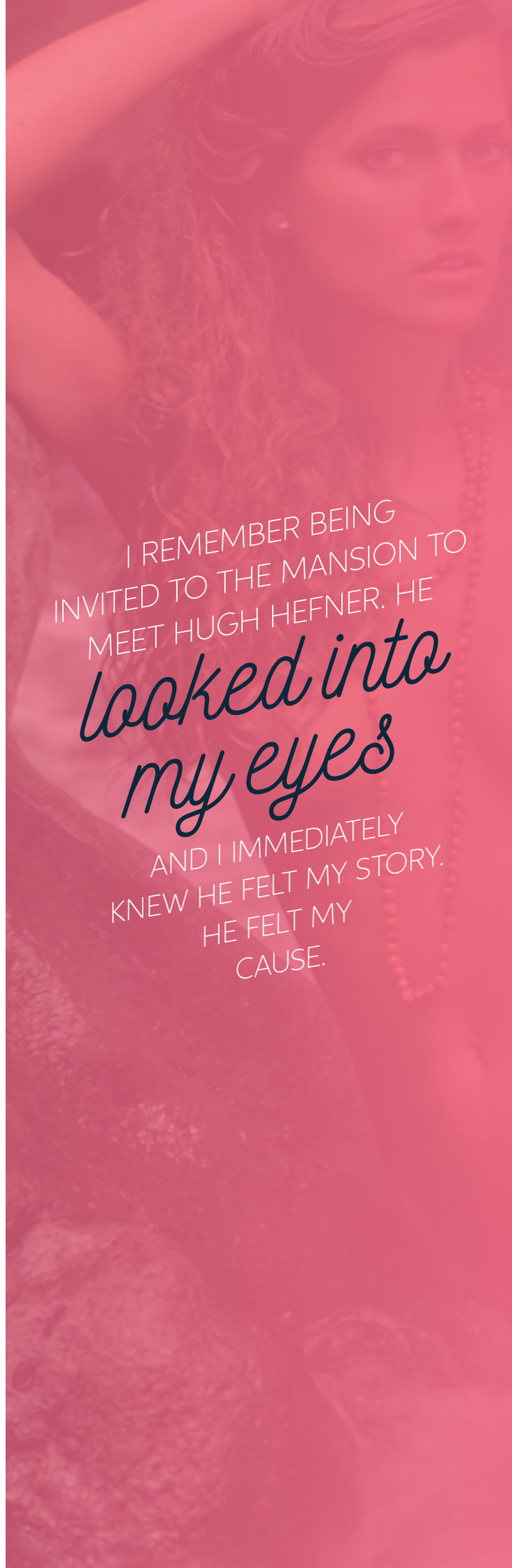
COSSEY: Yes. When I drive to Florida from Georgia I sometimes travel through unsavory areas, so I have one in my car. When I went to apply for the license, I thought, I bet I’m not going to get this. They take your fingerprints and do a background check, and I thought they would find me mentally unstable or something as a transsexual. I told my husband they’d probably think there was a psychological risk with me. I imagined them saying, “Do we want someone like that running around with a gun?” But it came through, and now I have to renew it every five years. I never had a problem in the States with any of those legal issues.

PLAYBOY: Do you have more allegiance to the US or the UK?

COSSEY: I definitely feel more allegiance to the US. It causes arguments with my sister because she says I’m anti-Britain. I’m not a royalist. I know for a fact [the editors of] *News of the World* were vile and spent quite a bit of money to get access to my medical files. That’s how they got concrete evidence to run the story that exposed me. I do miss the antiquities of Europe, and I go back every year, but America is such a beautiful country if you’ve got fire in your belly. I still have the home where I was born back in my village, but I would certainly feel much happier to spend what time I have left in the States.

PLAYBOY: In 1989 you married your first husband, Elias Fattal. After you returned from your honeymoon, News of the World printed another salacious headline, SEX CHANGE PAGE THREE GIRL WEDS, which outed you to Fattal’s conservative family. They summoned him, and you never saw or spoke to him again. Your marriage was annulled and you received no entitlements. Did you ever find out what happened?

COSSEY: There was no closure. I know he’s now married and has kids. It still burns me. Sometimes it comes across my mind like, I need answers. You’re left with a certain amount of psychosis. He knew I was transsexual because I gave



I REMEMBER BEING
INVITED TO THE MANSION TO
MEET HUGH HEFNER. HE

*looked into
my eyes*

AND I IMMEDIATELY
KNEW HE FELT MY STORY.
HE FELT MY
CAUSE.

him my book to read. You have four years with someone and you feel you've covered everything. My heart was broken. The whole thing is ugly. But you pick up the pieces and get on with your life.

PLAYBOY: It was after that marriage ended that you asked to pose for PLAYBOY. Why?

COSSEY: I did PLAYBOY as a Bond girl before everything about me came out, and I was very proud. This time, I was in the middle of my battle with the European Court of Human Rights. With the fight I was dealing with, trying to get recognition and everything, I thought it would be a great platform if PLAYBOY would allow it. I had done pinups and calendars and glamour shoots, but to be the first transsexual in PLAYBOY, I felt absolutely honored. I remember being invited to the Mansion to meet Hugh Hefner. He looked into my eyes and I immediately knew he felt my story. He felt my cause.

PLAYBOY: In hindsight, did appearing in PLAYBOY help the cause?

COSSEY: It helped to no end. PLAYBOY's readership is mostly male and heterosexual, so it allowed me to get out there and prove that people like myself can be sexy and attractive. That's what I aimed to do at that point. I wanted to fight for the right of recognition. And PLAYBOY gave me the opportunity to ask for a whole hour on most of the talk shows. I did shows with Phil Donahue twice, Maury Povich, Howard Stern, Joan Rivers and Arsenio Hall. It wasn't just a 10- or 15-minute segment; it was an entire hour. And it gave people the chance to get to know me, to feel the situation and hopefully gain empathy and understanding. That was my goal, and PLAYBOY was a great platform for that.

PLAYBOY: Your pictorial sparked as much interest and controversy as it did because in the 1990s there were few, if any, successful transgender actors, authors or activists. That's no longer the case, with transgender men and women now recognized on television, in office and elsewhere.

COSSEY: Every time something positive happens, I'm watching with my mouth open, gasping and thinking. *Fabulous*. Laverne Cox is so comfortable talking about it. It's the changing times. You used to see a gay friend on a TV show only because it was fashionable. It's not fashionable. It's reality. It's the way it is.

PLAYBOY: What are your thoughts on Bruce Jenner's coming out as a transgender woman?

COSSEY: It was a bit of a shock, to say the least. He's been such an incredible athlete and hero, with all those raging male hormones running through his body. Despite the media buildup, I actually forgot Diane Sawyer's interview was airing. But I saw clips in the days after. The guy is obviously going through a lot of pain and suffering. I hope he finds his happiness, but it's going to be tough. I hope he's not in a hurry to get surgery.

PLAYBOY: Why is that?

COSSEY: Sawyer never asked him, "Does wearing women's clothes turn you on sexually?" That's what somebody needs to establish. It's actually the first thing a psychiatrist asked me in counseling. That would be a fetish, and there's

nothing wrong with having a fetish. Life's too short; enjoy it, whatever. But I would hate for him to lose his three-piece suite and live to regret it. There's a big difference between being a transsexual and being a transvestite. Again, there's nothing wrong with being a transvestite. If you want to live that way, fine. But I've seen and heard so many horror stories of people going through surgery, becoming miserable and killing themselves because it was not the right step for them. And it's a very painful surgery. I would hate for him to lose that part of his body and go through transition, especially at this stage in his life, because he's no spring chicken. He's in a public situation going through something so sensitive. I pray he gets the right counseling. It's not what's between your legs at the end of the day.

PLAYBOY: Has the growing acceptance of LGBT people made life easier?

COSSEY: I don't know if I'll ever stop feeling like a second-class citizen. It's embedded and instilled from birth. You grow up, you don't fit in, you don't belong, you're bullied. That doesn't go away in five minutes. I don't think it ever goes away. When I look back at it all, what I went through was tragic. But how do you deal with pain? You shrug it off. That's the British way of doing it, at least. *[laughs]* I do feel a hell of a lot better. I'm an optimist and try to make light of the tragedies I went through, to see the funny side, and that has helped tremendously. I'm never going to be ashamed of something I had no control over, but I don't want to walk around with it written on my forehead. I know I felt great when I was successful as a model, before my career took off in a different direction.

PLAYBOY: Speaking of your career, the job that started – and nearly ended – it all was *For Your Eyes Only*. The Bond films are bigger than ever, winning Oscars and raking in hundreds of millions of dollars. If you were to get a phone call tomorrow asking you to appear in another Bond movie, what would you say?

COSSEY: There's not a big calling for 60-year-old transsexual women. *[laughs]* I would hear it out. I would never say no to something that's tastefully done, but I'm not expecting to grace any covers anytime soon.

PLAYBOY: This summer you're releasing the e-book version of your second autobiography, *My Story*. What should new readers expect?

COSSEY: The story itself is about injustice. I've always felt I was forced into this situation. The book is obviously topical, and I hope it helps people. People go through my situation and they're rejected and resented and they have a hell of a time. I was blessed with a stable family and friends, and I don't know if I could have gone out into the open and stood up and fought if I didn't have them. I still get stacks of letters from people who say, "You made my transition easier." That's always going to be in my bones. With what time I have left, if I can help in any way, I will. Even PLAYBOY rerunning my pictorial means something, so thank you, Hef. Live and let live. We have such ugliness in this world over religion, gender seems like a minor issue. ♣

PLAYMATE

GLOBETROTTER

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JOHN ZELEZNY

ALEXSA

SLUSARC



MISS SEPTEMBER

ING A CHI

Our petite Miss September isn't easy to track down. Rarely home in Ukraine, Aleksa Slusarchi travels from country to country, enlivening photo shoots with her special, versatile brand of modeling. "One of the big benefits of my job," she says, "is meeting new and different people. That's always so interesting."

Aleksa models in such styles as fashion, portrait, lingerie and glamour. But many of her shoots are black-and-white art-nude, where she relies on her gymnastics training to perform complex, athletic poses. Of course, PLAYBOY might just be her favorite. "I was excited to shoot for PLAYBOY South Africa because I really like the bright, distinctive style of PLAYBOY."





PHOTOGRAPHY: JOHN ZELEDNY / www.johnzelednyphoto.com
HAIR & MAKEUP: JESSICA VAUGHN



MANY OF ALEKSA'S SHOOTS ARE

BLACK & WHITE ART-NUDES

WHERE SHE RELIES ON HER
GYMNASTICS TRAINING TO PERFORM
COMPLEX ATHLETIC POSES











MISS SEPTEMBER

ALEKSA SLUSARCHI

PLAYMATE DATA SHEET

NAME: Celekša Slusarchi

BUST: 86

WAIST: 59

HIPS: 85

HEIGHT: 165cm

WEIGHT: 43kg

BIRTH DATE: 15 January 1994

BIRTHPLACE: Ukraine

WHAT IS IT LIKE POSING FOR PLAYBOY?

On the set, I feel so free – since I engage in artistic gymnastics, I have a toned body and I'm in very good shape.

WHAT KIND OF MEN DO YOU LIKE?

I need a man with something special but I don't know the words in English (laughs).

WHAT DO YOU LIKE BEST ABOUT MODELLING?

I went to model school, and I've been shooting nudes since I was eighteen. I like my work very much, and I want to continue to shoot!

GET ME A PLANE TICKET TO:

Japan

THREE THINGS I CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT:

My cat, my family, my travels.

MY FAVORITE FOOD:

Sushi, salmon and oysters

I'M NOT EMBARRASSED TO SAY:

I'm a model.

WHAT SECRET TALENT DO YOU HAVE?

I am also a gymnast and extremely flexible!

IF I COULD HAVE A SUPER POWER

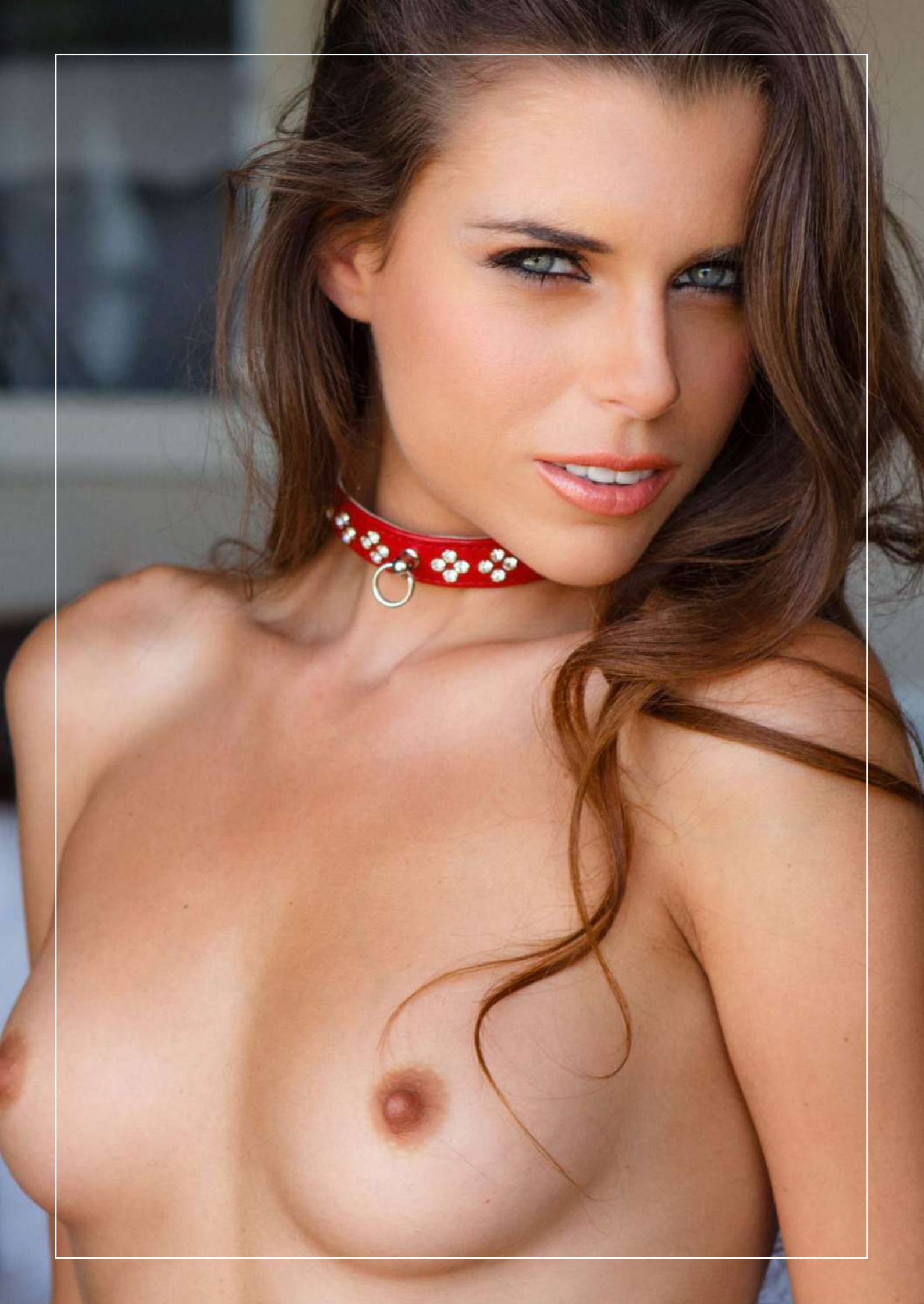
I would like to be able to fly and teleport :)



FAVORITE QUOTE

"You are responsible, forever, for what you have tamed. You are responsible for your rose."
– Antoine de Saint-Exupéry





PLAYBOY'S

Party Jokes



A new study has found that men who are vegan have a much lower sperm count compared with those who eat meat. Even worse, the few sperm that vegan men do have refuse to go anywhere near an egg.

"Check out my new gold Apple Watch," a smarmy guy said to his co-worker.

"That's a terrible purchase," the co-worker responded. "If I wanted to spend R100,000 on something that will be obsolete in two years, I'd buy an engagement ring."

An attractive coed approached her professor and whispered, "I'd do anything to get an A in this course."

"You'd really do anything I want?" asked the professor with a mischievous smile.

"Yes, anything," purred the girl suggestively.

The professor looked around to make sure no one could hear him and then asked, "Would you... study?"

Neil Armstrong used to tell unfunny jokes about the moon and then follow them up by saying, "I guess you had to be there."

What is the difference between in-laws and outlaws?

Outlaws are wanted.

Most of the men and women at the gym are working toward the same goal: getting the perfect female body.

We never wanted to believe that our buddy was stealing from his job on a road construction crew. But when we visited his house, all the signs were there.

Don't play with a woman's heart; she has only one. Instead, play with her boobs - she has two of those.

A woman complained to her psychiatrist that her husband was 300 percent impotent. "I don't think that's mathematically possible," the psychiatrist said.

"Well, the first 100 percent you can imagine," she said. "Plus, he burned his tongue and broke his fingers."

"I think my girlfriend is confused," a man told his buddy. "When I said I liked it rough I was talking about the sex, not the entire relationship."

We don't understand the phrase "If you get my daughter pregnant, you're marrying her."

That's the equivalent of saying, "If you're not smart enough to put on a condom, you should be in my daughter's life forever."

Disappointment: Running into a wall with an erection and breaking your nose.

Here's how to explain the folly of marrying too young to the overly eager: Getting married at 21 is like leaving a party at 8:30pm.

A patient said to his doctor, "I suffer from premature ejaculation. Can you help me?"

"I doubt it," said the doctor. "But I can introduce you to a woman with a short attention span."

A gorgeous woman walked into a bar. After a few drinks she asked a man if he would like to go home with her, and he accepted.

When they arrived at her apartment and he walked into her bedroom, he noticed a wall lined with stuffed animals arranged on different shelves according to size. The smallest sat on the bottom shelf, the midsize on the middle shelf, and the largest on the top shelf. He found this peculiar but brushed it aside and proceeded to have sex with the woman. After they finished the man asked, "So how was it?"

The woman replied, "You may have anything from the bottom shelf."

SEND YOUR JOKES TO PARTYJOKES@PLAYBOY.CO.ZA.

PLAYBOY WILL PAY R100 TO THE CONTRIBUTORS WHOSE SUBMISSIONS ARE SELECTED

SPRING SUIT GUIDE

PLAY

FOR

Misty

Me

FATHER JOHN MISTY
(A.K.A. JOSH TILLMAN) IS INDEPENDENT
MUSIC'S SINGER-SONGWRITER-
TRICKSTER EXTRAORDINAIRE.

HERE HE WEARS SPRING'S SHARPEST
SUITS WITH FLAIR

FOR SEVERAL YEARS and seven albums there existed J. Tillman, a solo singer-songwriter prone to releasing self-serious LPs with titles such as *Cancer and Delirium*. Then dude ate magic mushrooms, slept in a tree and concocted a new stage persona. And so it was written that henceforth the former Fleet Foxes drummer would be known as Father John Misty, the wisecracking prophet behind 2012's *Fear Fun*, breathing equal parts sweat, sex and spirituality into his folk-indebted music. Earlier this year the suit-donning singer (whom we've dressed in the season's coolest looks) returned with *I Love You, Honeybear*, his most magical, absurd and downright infectious release to date. Consider us enlightened.

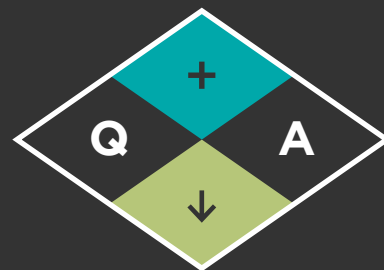
PHOTOGRAPHY BY FRANK OCKENFELS 3

STYLING BY MICHAEL NASH / TEXT BY DAN HYMAN



+

Velvet blazer by **Suit Supply**
Tuxedo shirt and tuxedo
trousers by **Polo Ralph
Lauren**



Father John Misty is something of a contrived performance persona. Do you view your stage outfits as costumes?

Essentially anything you wear on stage is a costume. It doesn't matter if you wore it earlier that day, you know? It's all a persona. There's something refreshing about a kind of forthrightness, some acknowledgment of "I'm here to put on a show. I'm here to look good for the girls and sing my ass off."

Is there any particular reason you almost exclusively wear suits?

I think of a suit as being like a talisman: If you wear it every day and put more performances into it – all hygienic considerations aside – it becomes a powerful object. Everything in rock music is a suit, whether you're putting on flannel and a beard or an oxford shirt and boat shoes or an oversize T-shirt and an ironic baseball cap. It's all a sense of identity. Anything I put on is going to become some kind of costume, so it may as well be a suit.

You were raised in a strict evangelical Christian household. Was expressing yourself sartorially a challenge?

It was a huge, constant fight. When I was really young I used to draw all over my clothes; I would come home from school with my pants, shoes and shirt covered in doodles. That was my earliest form of expression. I was really into making little holes and cuts all over my clothes. I remember the first time I ever did my own laundry, I put in bleach instead of laundry detergent, and all my clothes were covered in bleach stains. I thought it was the coolest thing ever. I didn't see it as any kind of tragedy, because I was really into mutilating and vandalizing my clothes. In high school I was really into wearing the ugliest combinations. I wore the stupidest things you could imagine. I would buy old-man slacks and then wear Tevas with wool socks.

Was that an experiment to see how people treated you when you dressed a certain way?

It was just to be a little shit. But it was kind of pointing out how subjective the whole clothing and identity game was.

SPRING SUIT GUIDE

+

Stretch wool suit jacket and polo shirt by **Boss Hugo Boss**
Pocket square by **Tom Ford**

+

Trench coat and
shirt by Saint
Laurent
Suit by Armani
Collezioni



Let's talk about your beard. It has become your calling card.

I think there's a certain anxiety around clean-cut white men, like if you fuck up in some inane way they're going to get angry. But with a beard, you look either like the Green River killer or like you make tofu ice cream.

Some would say your most compelling creative pursuit is forming the persona of Father John Misty.

It's a patently ridiculous name. The Father John Misty thing is an acknowledgment of "Sure, anything on stage is in some ways a curation or in some ways fraudulent," but if you can't accept the distance between this explicitly honest music and this ridiculous name, then there's not really much you will understand about it.

Is it flattering to be compared to some fantastic musicians, including Harry Nilsson, Neil Young, Townes Van Zandt and Randy Newman?

SPRING SUIT GUIDE



Not really. I mean, the worst musician imaginable will get compared to Neil Young at least once. I'm never going to be those guys. However, I think I'm definitely the first songwriter in a good while to include the word cum in a song.

You mentioned you love the fact that PLAYBOY is interviewing you. Explain.

Because I still remember the first time I saw a PLAYBOY. I was at a friend's house; I must have been nine or 10 years old. Pubic hair was a big revelation. It was something I didn't realize existed – why would I? That was kind of the indelible impression it made on me. There's something about published nudity. To me it's representative of a certain variety of human agency that I really like. Maybe I'm the only person who could make naked chicks sound quite that boring.

+

Three-piece suit
and boots by **Tom
Ford**
Shirt by **Marc
Jacobs**

+

Suit by **Dolce & Gabbana**
Turtleneck by **Burberry London**
Sunglasses by **Ray-Ban**
Pocket square by **Brooks Brothers**;
Bracelet by **Saint Laurent**





PORN FOR
Women

THERE IS A HUGE DISCONNECT BETWEEN WHAT WOMEN WANT IN BED AND WHAT IS CURRENTLY BEING PRODUCED IN PORNOGRAPHY.

BY VANESSA BUTLER

Cindy Gallop, an extravagant New Yorker/advertising consultant, dates younger men, preferably those who are still in their early twenties. This preference is something she's very open about. Not only is she open about her inclinations, she's open about her sex life, which is something that caused quite a stir at TED2009 in Long Beach, California when she stepped out on stage and said, "When I date younger men, I have sex with younger men. And when I have sex with younger men I encounter very directly and personally the real ramifications of the creeping ubiquity of hardcore pornography in our culture."

She's right. There is a huge disconnect between what women want in bed and what is currently being produced in pornography.

When we watch a woman being drilled by a man who's bending her into some risqué Cirque du Soleil position to the point of shrill orgasmic ecstasy, it becomes ingrained in our brains that these are the things we need to do in bed to please our partner, which is not always so. It's okay to watch pornography with a far-fetched storyline; it's just that what's being portrayed on-screen is not what most women want, which is something, it seems, men of a certain age are finding difficult to differentiate.

"At the moment, 99.9 percent of all mainstream mass-market porn is made by men for men," Gallop explained. I contacted her to ask if she thought it was a good idea for boyfriends to bring porn into the bedroom after a particularly distraught reader wrote in about his botched attempt to watch *Let's Play Anal Twister* with his girlfriend. "I have to explain to guys that women like sex and porn, too. But when we get ourselves off, we have to watch the porn that's made for guys... it's entirely male-centric in its worldview and it doesn't take into account at all women's needs, wants and desires."

Despite pornography being mass-produced almost immediately after the invention of the camera, it wasn't until the 1970s that most companies even toyed with the idea of creating porn for the female demographic.

While the erotica industry kept the visually explicit material strictly for the boys, women were climbing the ranks of new media, which eventually led to the 1972 April edition of *Cosmopolitan*, which contained the now-infamous nude shot of Burt Reynolds on a fur rug as a male centerfold. "At the time, you know, men liked to look at women naked. Well, nobody talked about it, but women liked to look at men naked," explained Editor Helen Gurley Brown in *The Improbable First Century of Cosmopolitan Magazine*. "I did."

Burt Reynolds, sexual pioneer? Kind of.

After the centerfold hit the shelves, there was an immediate shift in the world of pornography. It was now apparent that women, once thought to be strictly nonvisual creatures, liked to get off to graphic material and couldn't be quenched by the eager flip of a page in an erotic novel.

Playgirl began publication the following year, promptly selling out its first 600,000 copies. Other women's magazines around the world began including their own celebrity centerfolds. In 1984, the adult company Femme Productions, run by ex-porn star Candida Royalle, began shooting films specifically with heterosexual women in mind.

"When I'm watching porn trying to get myself off, I have to avoid processing the porn through the lens of female experience," says Gallop. "By which I mean when I'm watching, I'm thinking, 'I know that hurts! If she keeps her leg up there one more moment! I know she's not coming because nothing in that position can conceivably cause her to come!' and then it's really hard for me to get off."

Despite our leaps and bounds since 1972, women still deal with frustrations when watching porn. Yes, there are those who are more inclined to watch what mainstream porn is producing: as of 2003, one out of every three porn site viewers is female, making about 27 percent of porn users women. But despite the spike in women watching online porn, many feel that the strong male gaze imposed by the years of films strictly developed for men since porn's beginning is hard to shake.

Remarkably, the conversation about women and pornography has been prompted not because of some uprising of sexually frustrated women wanting quality curated porn, but because of *Fifty Shades of Grey*, a book that was originally written as *Twilight* fan fiction. Let that one sink in. I would say most, if not all, of my girlfriends who would've never indulged me in their sex lives have brought up what kind of sex toys they're currently using because of the book, and it's looking like that is a worldwide trend. There's no denying the desire for more female-oriented pornography now.

But what about the distraught owner of *Let's Play Anal Twister*? Should he watch porn with his girlfriend?

"Sadly, guys should totally be able to share porn with their girlfriends, but right now the porn is not the stuff that will incline most girlfriends towards that process. I'm afraid that it may have the complete opposite effect they want it to," said Gallop.

There are, however, many men and women who are making leaps in the world of porn for women. There is a small but budding branch of pornography loosely referred to as feminist porn, which, according to sex-positive feminist Tristan Taormino, is "porn [that] responds to dominant images with alternative ones and creates its own iconography."

Whether it's labeled feminist porn or not, there are films out there that are perfect to introduce to your partner and even, if you're lucky, watch together.

James Deen

He's probably the only male porn star you can think of, and there's a very good reason why: James Deen knows his way around the female body and psyche. Portrayed as a "gateway drug" to porn in the media, James Deen has been in the industry since 2004. He's been in 1,312 films, which isn't too shabby, and costarred alongside PLAYBOY centerfold Lindsay Lohan in Paul Schrader's film *The Canyons*. The appeal of James Deen is obvious. He doesn't have the looks of someone who you would usually accept as a male porn star, and he's known for incredibly passionate scenes ranging from soft and sweet to rough.



MakeLoveNotPorn.TV

"I'm totally biased," says Cindy Gallop, "but we created www.makelovenotporn.tv to appeal to both men and women. We are not porn, we are not amateurs, we are real-world sex and therefore these are videos that can absolutely appeal to the both of them." Even in their early closed beta stage, the feedback they started receiving was ecstatic, with men saying, "Oh my god, I've been waiting for a site like this, this is real-world sex my wife and I can watch together."

Portrait of a Call Girl

Portrait of a Call Girl, starring Jessie Andrews, is an award-winning pornographic film shot in 2011. It's basically as mainstream as you're going to get when it comes to female-friendly pornography. Between its actual acting, strong storyline and elegant cinematography, it's the perfect film to enjoy as a whole. Some found its storyline a little stereotypical, as it deals with a woman who is struggling with a life in prostitution and has many story arcs that are unfavorable to those who work in the profession, but as a whole it's an enjoyable piece of cinema. It's also really great because after you watch Jessie Andrews get screwed, you can go on her Tumblr and see the cute outfits she's wearing.

Lust Films

Touted as a pioneer in feminist pornography, Erika Lust has been writing and producing some of the most exquisite films out of Barcelona since 2004. The award-winning vignettes entitled *Five Hot Stories for Her*, created with couples and women in mind, "explore sexuality with courage and originality, giving a fresh perspective on the monotonous world of adult entertainment." For a taste of what you can expect from Lust's films, check out the short film *Room 33*, which was originally included in a project with five other directors.



Women & Erotica

SOURCE: WWW.WALLSTREETJOURNAL.COM, WWW.SMH.COM.AU

5 OF THE
TOP 10
BOOKS
ON KINDLE ARE
E-Romances

9 OUT OF 10 PURCHASES
OF Romance
Novels ARE MADE
BY WOMEN

1 OUT OF 50 Porn Site
SUBSCRIBERS
ARE WOMEN

1 OUT OF 3
Porn Viewers
ARE WOMEN

Sex toy sales increases post 50 Shades of Grey

(IN THE FIRST YEAR)

SOURCE: WWW.FORBES.COM, WWW.PUREROMANCE.COM

Bondage Items
186%

146%
Bondage Tape

Blindfolds
121%

772%
Ben Wa Balls

See for yourself

JAMES DEEN

[HTTP://YOUTU.BE/KKYQJB7FLVC](http://youtu.be/KKYQJB7FLVC)

CINDY GALLOP

[HTTP://YOUTU.BE/FV8N_E_6TPC](http://youtu.be/FV8N_E_6TPC)

PORTRAIT OF A
CALL GIRL

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INTERVIEW



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PLAYBOY INTERVIEW: Bill Maher

BY DAVID HOCHMAN

A candid conversation with the dean of political comedy about Muslims, puritanism, Fox News and why mixing the news and humor is so damn hard

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ANDREW MACPHERSON

Inside Bill Maher's office in Los Angeles, you don't need a poli-sci degree to know which way the political winds are blowing. There's a (fake) *Zagat* guide to marijuana dispensaries, a bumper sticker that reads HONK IF YOU HATE AMERICA, a studly photo of a shirtless Vladimir Putin and a TV monitor forever tuned to MSNBC. Even for some lefties, Maher is too liberal. And since he also has a pronounced libertarian streak, he frustrates them further. But that's what makes him one of progressive America's most audacious comic voices.

Since 1993 Maher has mixed sharp humor with current events, often in conversation with an odd array of athletes, movie stars, pundits and chaired professors. *Politically Incorrect With Bill Maher* aired on Comedy Central and, later, ABC until 2002. Most blamed its cancellation on the controversy Maher stirred shortly after 9/11, when he dubbed America and its long-range missiles more "cowardly" than the terrorists who rammed into the Twin Towers. A year later, he was back with *Real Time With Bill Maher* on HBO, a live hour-long commentary-on-the-news show that was recently renewed through 2017. Lately he's been getting flak for speaking out against Islam, saying the religion itself breeds violence. The University of California, Berkeley briefly disinvited him to give last winter's commencement address. But once again Maher prevailed and was there with a smirk and a point of view. "C'mon, it's Berkeley," he

told the graduates in that bastion of liberalism. "I think I can speak freely here; I mean, I hope I can." Born 20 January 1956 in New York City, William Maher Jr grew up in a world of headlines. His father was a news editor for NBC, and family dinner conversations at home in New Jersey touched on the various revolutions shaping the world. Maher studied English and history at Cornell University, but comedy was his true superpower. Still, he spent more than a decade wisecracking his way to prominence. Among his glory moments on the way up: co-starring with Shannon Tweed and Adrienne Barbeau in *Cannibal Women in the Avocado Jungle of Death*. Anti-theist, pot lover, defender of gay rights and free speech, Maher is every Fox News anchor's worst nightmare, but he's a very good interview, reports Contributing Editor David Hochman, who last interviewed actor Vince Vaughn for PLAYBOY. "Bill Maher doesn't do knee-jerk liberalism," Hochman says. "His views on politics, religion and social issues don't follow a particular party line. Just when you think you've nailed his slant, he'll throw you in a whole new direction, and usually in the funniest way."

PLAYBOY: Are Americans really as stupid as you say they are?

MAHER: Absolutely. You cannot underestimate how dumb people are in this country, and this is something I say all the time. Everyone jumps down my throat, but it's true, and it's dangerous. It's why politicians

get away with so much bullshit. For instance, the American people think the economy is the most important issue; yet when polled last year, the majority of Americans thought the unemployment rate was 32 percent, when it was actually 5.8 percent. If that's not stupidity, it's terribly misinformed. Even during the Great Depression the unemployment rate was, at its worst, 25 percent. More than half the Americans polled, when asked what our government spends the most on in its budget, said foreign aid, which of course accounts for just one percent. Only 20 percent got the right answer, which is Social Security. Less than half those polled could name the three branches of government. A third couldn't name any branch of government. Stupid, stupid, stupid.

PLAYBOY: So should we just do away with democracy?

MAHER: [Laughs] No. As Churchill said, democracy's the worst form of government, except for all the others. In the information age, we were supposed to get smarter with the internet, but we're somehow getting less smart. People are either in a bubble, getting only the information they want to see, or they're on porn or playing *Angry Birds* or whatever else they're doing. They're not getting information. We're slaves to micro-targeting. You go to Yahoo and it knows what you click on, so you see only stories about the Kardashians or some guy with a face tattoo – and that's a problem. You're not reading about Boko Haram or the latest congressional fuckup. When you're dealing with an electorate that



WHEN YOU'RE DEALING
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that doesn't know
anything, YOU CAN SAY
ANYTHING.

doesn't know anything, you can say anything. That's how you get zombie lies.

PLAYBOY: Zombie lies?

MAHER: Yes, these lies that live forever even though they're not true. They're the undead of politics. I noticed Iowa Republican senator Joni Ernst referring to the Keystone jobs program in the Republican response to Barack Obama's State of the Union address this year. Okay, we've proved for a couple of years now that the Keystone jobs program would create only 35 jobs. As one senator said, you'd create more jobs opening a single McDonald's. Trickle-down economics is another zombie lie: Give the rich tax breaks and the poor will thrive. Sam Brownback, the governor of Kansas, destroyed his state's entire economy selling that zombie.

PLAYBOY: Did you get your money's worth from your million-dollar contribution to Obama's last campaign?

MAHER: It was a great investment. It's funny. We invented a character on the show called Mitt McCain, who's an amalgam of the candidates who could have been president instead of Obama, and it's not pretty. Under Mitt McCain the auto industry has collapsed because Mitt Romney wanted to let that happen. We're at war with Guatemala, Finland and nine other countries John McCain

would have warred against. And the attorney general is Dick Cheney's head. You sometimes hear people, even Democrats, say, "I'm tired of Obama because he didn't live up to his promises." I say, "Are you sure about that? Maybe they just didn't cover it on TMZ." Because Obama is slowly going down the list: Cuba, gay marriage and, I'm hoping before he leaves, pot. He's trying to finish strong.

PLAYBOY: Half the country still loves to hate him, though.

MAHER: Obama should be a better bragger. He needs to start acting like he won the last election instead of lost it. If the Republicans had his record, they'd be riding it like a fuckin' wild bronco into the 2016 election. Their attitude would be, Why even have an election? We've tripled the stock market, unemployment is below six percent, 10 million more people have health insurance, the auto industry is back on its feet. Oh, and he averted a depression.

PLAYBOY: Who's your money on for the White House race?

MAHER: I'd say Scott Walker will be the nominee for the Republicans. Jeb Bush is building momentum, but he's attached at the hip to Common Core, which the Tea Party despises. True, he's not the doofus his brother was, but in today's Republican Party, that's actually a huge minus. Then

there's Chris Christie. His numbers with Republican primary voters are horrible, close to Sarah Palin level, though if you like small government, he's the guy for you, because soon half his administration will be in jail. But Walker? He's a folk hero with the people from the Tea lagoon and with the establishment wing. His father was an evangelical preacher – a huge plus with the snake handlers and flat-Earthers who make up the base. And he won three times, including a recall, in a blue state, and he faced down public unions. The one problem is he didn't graduate from college – oh wait, that's a plus too, because book learnin' is, you know, suspicious.

PLAYBOY: And for the Democrats?

MAHER: I'm thinking it has to be Hillary Clinton. And I'd love to see her run with Elizabeth Warren or Bernie Sanders. They're the two lefties in the Democratic Party, and we've never really tried left-wing politics, at least not in my lifetime. The real question mark is what the Republicans will run on, because they can't run on jobs; unemployment is too low. I suspect we'll see the batshit campaign tactics we saw with the last few Bush runs: John McCain had a black baby; Willie Horton came out of nowhere; John Kerry went somehow from a war hero to a despicable coward in that





insane turnaround. It's going to be some made-up issue the Republicans will harp on. Remember Jeb Bush's father running in 1988? We had these rumors about Kitty Dukakis burning the American flag and all that shit about Michael Dukakis not cleaning up Boston Harbor. If things are still going well, we'll have some picture of Hillary scratching her ass at Mount Rushmore in 1975. That's all the Republicans can run on at this point. **PLAYBOY:** Who's a bigger threat for liberals, the Koch brothers or Roger Ailes?

MAHER: Now that's a Hobson's choice. I'm stumped. Pass. *[laughs]* You know, they're both bad. With the Kochs, it's like sports. The odds are with the ones who spend the most money. The Yankees don't win every year, but they're almost always in it. And if they're not in it one year, they'll go out and buy better players the next year. It's pretty much that way in politics too. In the midterms one out of every \$10 spent by the Republicans was a Koch brothers dollar, and now they're spending, what, a billion dollars on this campaign? That's kind of a lot. And yet I'd say Roger Ailes is worse, because Fox News creates the debate for the GOP. Whatever comes out of Fox News, or as I call it, the Alternative History Channel, is chapter and verse for red America, and red America doesn't go outside that bubble. You can rail against immigration because they don't know that net immigration to America has been zero for years. The brown people aren't coming anymore, so why are we building giant walls? Why are we spending all this money? That fact never gets through, because on Fox News they would never report it. But it's true. In the 30 years following 1980, 12 million Mexicans came to America. And that was in three cars. *[laughs]* Oh, I can hear the liberals getting mad already! It's a joke, and jokes are good, so fuck you and deal with it. Anyway, that was when Mexican women were having seven children. Now they're having two. Not

that the people at Fox News like to think about sex.

PLAYBOY: What are you suggesting?

MAHER: They're all super repressed. Remember when Bill O'Reilly settled that harassment suit claim that he was trying to get some on the side? His response afterward was "I will never speak of it again." And Sean Hannity seems especially corked. At the same time, I read somewhere that Fox encourages Megyn Kelly to wear sleeveless dresses so the old horny white men who watch can get off on it. It's part of something larger in this country, actually, which is people who don't have satisfactory sex lives hating on people who do. Someone once said the definition of *sleazy* is someone having more sex than you, and you feel that when you watch Fox. **PLAYBOY:** Do you think Americans are repressed in general?

MAHER: Listen, America is built on two fault lines. One of course is race – that all men are created equal except the ones we keep as slaves. *[laughs]* The other one is sex. This country was founded by Puritans and also by libertarians. That dichotomy was explored beautifully in *Thy Neighbor's Wife*, the book by Gay Talese. It goes to that notion that we are built on a fault line and are schizophrenic about it. We pride ourselves on being a modern country, but we are big fucking babies when it comes to sex.

Puritanism is one of those dominoes that have to fall, along with pot and gay marriage. The way the media and the population respond to these so-called sex scandals, I mean, Jesus! Celebrity sex videos, sexting scandals, Eliot Spitzer, Bill Clinton, slut-shaming from the left and right. People! Eliot Spitzer made a *mistake*, a private mistake, and we've exiled him. He's a brilliant guy who is now toxic? This is horseshit. More than any other Democrat, he went after Wall Street, which is much more important than this nonsense about who he's fucking. He can't have a place in public life anymore because he was with a prostitute? This is what

I mean about stupidity.

PLAYBOY: So live and let live.

MAHER: Absolutely. I wish there were an entire party in politics called the Pervert Party. It could be Bill Clinton, Eliot Spitzer, John Edwards and the ghosts of Martin Luther King Jr, JFK and FDR. Look at all this talent that we exile and persecute, as we did with Clinton, because of sexual peccadilloes. This is a domino that has to fall. The idea that the mayor of New York's spokeswoman, Lis Smith, couldn't keep her job because she dated Spitzer? She was dating an adulterer, a guy who went out with hookers. *Oooh*, the humanity! And that's New York City. When did New York become Salem on the Hudson? Sex has nothing to do with job performance. It's nobody's business.

PLAYBOY: Do people ever think you're a journalist?

MAHER: Yes, definitely. I'm not, though I have great respect for journalists. The difference is, journalists break stories. I don't break stories; I break new ways of looking at stories that have been broken.

PLAYBOY: You're certainly a free-speech advocate. Is there anything you find yourself holding back on?

MAHER: I guess it depends on which circle I'm in. There are things I wouldn't say on *Jimmy Kimmel* that I'd say on HBO, things I wouldn't say on HBO that I'd say in a live stand-up performance. Then there are things I wouldn't even say in stand-up that I'd say to my friends. The ninth ring of hell is the things I wouldn't even say to my friends that I think only to myself, and of course I can't say what those things are. When that movie *Noah* came out, I said on my show, "What's really disturbing about *Noah* isn't that it's silly, it's that it's immoral. It's about a psychotic mass murderer who gets away with it, and his name is God. Hey, God, you know you're kind of a dick when you're in a movie with Russell Crowe and you're the one with the anger issues."

But it was said with humor. People do need their minds blown, but not everywhere all the time. That would be like doing it in line at Starbucks. **PLAYBOY:** You took major heat last fall when you told Ben Affleck on your show that Islam is “the only religion that acts like the Mafia, that will fucking kill you if you say the wrong thing, draw the wrong picture or write the wrong book.” Even liberals said you were painting a vast global population with too broad a stroke. Then the *Charlie Hebdo* shootings happened. Did you somehow feel vindicated?

MAHER: Not vindicated, no. It was just another terrible example. My reaction once again was that if there are this many bad apples, there’s something wrong with the orchard. The fact remains that Islam is a uniquely intolerant and violent religion at this point in our history.

PLAYBOY: But Islam itself isn’t the problem. People are the problem. Extremism is the problem.

MAHER: Islam is absolutely the problem. Of course it is. It’s on every page of the Koran to despise the unbeliever. It’s in the Bible too, but I don’t think to that degree. I mean, even Jesus, the prince of peace and a pretty friendly guy, gets cranky at the thought of there being another god. Occasionally he’ll say, “Dude, you either go through me or you burn.” But that sentiment is in the Koran in spades. You can’t talk to fundamentalist Muslims about this, because they’ll always tell you that you got the translation wrong. All I

know is there are very bad beliefs in Islam that are mainstream beliefs, like you can’t make fun of the Prophet. That’s not just a few bad apples. That’s what everybody believes in this religion.

PLAYBOY: Not every Muslim is a terrorist.

MAHER: That’s what the other side always says. Okay, fine, but I don’t have the time to interview all 1.6 billion Muslims individually, as fun as that would be. [laughs] No knowledge is ever advanced without some generalization. When people

on you. You couldn’t have an art exhibit like *Piss Christ*, which made Giuliani mad in the 1990s. Hundreds of millions of Muslims believe that if you leave the religion you should get killed for that. Try walking down the street in Muslim areas – even in more tolerant places like Amman, Jordan – wearing shorty shorts or a T-shirt that says HEY, I AM GAY. That shit is not going to fly, not at all.

PLAYBOY: Aren’t you being as zealous as the zealots you’re accusing of zealotry?

MAHER: Here’s the long answer.

I was raised a liberal by two liberal parents, and liberalism springs from one thing above all: compassion. In my family we were always on the side of the under-dog and those being treated unfairly. I grew up in an all-white town in New Jersey in the 1960s, but my parents made sure I knew even as a little kid whose side we were on in the civil rights battles. We were with Kennedy and against

Southern governors standing in the doorways of schools to prevent black kids from going. What they taught me has stayed with me my whole life, be it blacks, gays, the poor, veterans, immigrants, women, people who are bullied, the disabled, people getting raped in the military, victims of police brutality – you name it, the only thing I don’t have tolerance for is intolerance.

I saw on Lawrence O’Donnell’s show a story about a kid in Pakistan saying to his father, “Please don’t send me to school; the Taliban will

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talk about Christendom in the Middle Ages, they didn’t interview every Christian.

But you need a statement? Here’s a statement: The vast, vast, vast majority of Muslims are not terrorists. But here’s the point people don’t bring up: They’re not terrorists, but they share some very bad ideas with terrorists, and bad ideas lead to bad behavior. You couldn’t put the Muslim equivalent of *The Book of Mormon* on Broadway. You can’t write a book like *The Satanic Verses* without millions going jihadi



kill me,” and I thought of blacks in our South getting killed back then for trying to go to school. My point is, there is a civil war going on in the Muslim world, and liberals can’t be so worried about multiculturalism that they come off as equivocal in this fight.

PLAYBOY: So liberals are too afraid of being seen as politically incorrect.

MAHER: Liberals get confused. They think, Okay, Muslims are a minority and they’re brown people, and I’m a good liberal, so I always have to be on the side of minorities and brown people.

That’s what some call the soft bigotry of low expectations. Somehow in the Muslim world we accept things we never would in the Western world. People go crazy over the tiniest violations of liberal values here at home, while horrid atrocities elsewhere are ignored.

Jonah Hill says “Suck my dick, faggot” in anger to a paparazzo and has to go on an apology tour, but in 10 Muslim countries you can get the death penalty for actually sucking a dick.

PLAYBOY: So what’s the fix for this centuries-old issue?

MAHER: Well, at this point we probably need to take out a few bad people. But the long-term solution to radical Islam is to let them have the civil war they need to have between themselves. Let the people who want to walk into the 21st century stand up against the people who want to stay in the seventh century. And as long as we’re

droning them, it gives everybody an excuse to hate us as the common enemy.

After this *Charlie Hebdo* thing, you saw a lot of Muslims stick their heads out and express their revulsion.

You wonder if we hadn’t opened

get to have this internecine warfare that intelligent observers agree they need to have. They need to take out their own trash.

PLAYBOY: By the way, does it hurt when the haters on Twitter and Facebook call you a bigot?

MAHER: That’s why I don’t look at Twitter or Facebook anymore. Of course it upsets me. How could it not? If I say anything, people attack me. If I say, “Good morning,” they say, “How dare you say good morning. That was Reagan’s word. Morning in America! You don’t get to use that word, Bill Maher!” Anyway, be mad at the people who are perpetrating these acts of terrorism, not me. This just doesn’t happen with Episcopalians.

PLAYBOY: Are you ever afraid of violence personally? You’ve outraged a lot of people by speaking out.

MAHER: I feel inoculated because I’ve dealt with this my whole career. I’ve been accused of being anti-Catholic, anti-women, anti-everybody. I’m not anti anybody. I’m pro the truth. And some people’s feathers get ruffled more than others’ by the truth. Everybody wants free speech except when it’s about them. For me, there are no waivers on free speech. It has to be across the board. I’m not afraid.

PLAYBOY: You own a

gun, though.

MAHER: Two guns. They’re for protection. We live in gun country, even in Los Angeles. I’m not expecting anything to happen, but I want to be ready for it. So I have a lot of security measures at my house.

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UNDERESTIMATE

how dumb
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Guantánamo Bay after 9/11 and started wars in Iraq and Afghanistan whether disaffected Muslims would have settled this differently. As long as our armed forces are in their countries and in their lives and killing them with drones, they don’t



If somebody gets into my bedroom, wow, they really did a lot to get there. They got past gates, bodyguards, dogs. If I have to shoot somebody in my bedroom, that was a commando raid on par with the SEALs getting Bin Laden. My gun is my last line of defense.

PLAYBOY: It's strange to think of you as a gun lover.

MAHER: I do not love my gun. That's the fucking problem with these Second Amendment people. They love guns. For them, it's not just that guns should be available; it's that they're seen as awesome. They go into Chipotle with their rifles. They go on dates with their guns. They take selfies with their guns. They teach their kids to kill with them. They give them as gifts. It's a sickness. It's a fetish. I call them ammosexuals.

PLAYBOY: You've been mixing comedy and politics for more than 20 years. You launched the format that gave way to Jon Stewart, John Oliver, Larry Wilmore and Stephen Colbert, among others. You should have patented the idea.

MAHER: I don't care about that. I didn't invent the roundtable; I think King Arthur did that. But I did put my twist on it. What I think we deserve credit for was, in 1993, nobody wanted to touch politics as an entertainment vehicle. It was the ultimate poison. Trust me, the only reason Comedy Central put that show on the air was because they needed something; they had nothing and this cost \$3, or whatever it cost them to pay me and push a piece of furniture into place. Everybody said, "Are you crazy? Politics? Are you kidding? We hate politics."

PLAYBOY: Now you have 34 Emmy nominations, though you've never won for your show.

MAHER: I think it's because when you say things that are uncomfortable you make all sorts of enemies.

PLAYBOY: People in Hollywood don't like you?

MAHER: You never hear from the ones who don't like you. The ones who come up to me are the ones who say

thank you for speaking the truth – for me, that's better than an Emmy. But it would be great to live in a world where you could tell the truth and also get invited to the White House and have all the politicians come on your show. The Clintons are still the big fish.

PLAYBOY: Jon Stewart is quitting *The Daily Show*. Colbert is taking over for David Letterman. Why have others burned out on this beat and you're still going strong?

MAHER: I don't know that they burned out so much as wanted to try something new. It also might be that those are two very bright guys, and maybe the shows they were doing just weren't challenging for them after a while. Mine is still an enormous challenge: I do an hour that's live – *live!* – and goes from a stand-up comedy monologue to a serious news-maker interview to a political panel discussion to a celebrity one-on-one interview, with no commercial breaks to reset. I don't think there's a workout like that anywhere else on TV, and if that doesn't keep you engaged, nothing will. I get off on challenging the conventional wisdom, not just from the right but from the left as well. My entire youth I dreamed of nothing but being Johnny Carson, but that kind of show would drive me nuts now. Too easy. I like being on the high wire.

PLAYBOY: Do you watch network news?

MAHER: I do watch network news, even though I've wanted to throw my shoe at the set for years now. When Brian Williams got suspended, we did a piece that started out "Brian Williams shouldn't have to go away because he lied; he should have to go away because the nightly news sucks." I thought people would boo because it was so harsh, but they cheered forcefully – it really hit a chord. Of course I was talking about all three network newscasts, because they're exactly the same. You get about five minutes at the top of actual news – unless it snowed anywhere near where they live on

the East Coast, and then that's the only thing happening in the world that day – before we're into "Making a Difference" and the medical segment and then the human-interest nonsense at the end: the autistic kid making a three-pointer and such. ABC devoted only 13 minutes all of last year to climate change, NBC only 25 minutes – this is journalistic malpractice.

PLAYBOY: Let's move on. Were you popular with girls growing up?

MAHER: Oh God, no. I had a crappy adolescence with girls. Most people have fun with girls starting in high school and definitely in college. I didn't get laid at all in college. Later, I made up for it. I did stuff people do in college when I was in my later 20s, 30s and probably 40s. I did some stupid things and said some stupid things, but it's good to look back and be ashamed of yourself sometimes. It means you're growing.

I dated a lot of girls, but I was never Wilt Chamberlain. Like, I always loved the PLAYBOY parties, but if there were orgies going on, they weren't inviting me. I wasn't the guy in the Grotto. I never had sex in the PLAYBOY Mansion. I wasn't hanging out with Bill Cosby with his little vial of go-to-sleep juice. [laughs]

PLAYBOY: Did the Cosby scandal catch you by surprise, or had you heard rumors on the stand-up circuit?

MAHER: I was not shocked. In the early to mid-1980s I did a movie – that was during my acting era. There was an attractive young black actress in the movie who told me she had just come off a film with Mr Cosby, and she said, "He tried to fuck me the first two weeks, and when it became clear it wouldn't happen he made every day thereafter a living hell." I had no reason to doubt it. We had no relationship; she was just telling me. And that always stuck in my mind. Since this shit has come to light, you talk to people who have had dealings with Bill Cosby, and it comes out not that he drugged some girl but that he did some super fucked-up shit. He's

a crazy fucker, is what he is. What is it, 30 women accusing him now? He could turn out to be the biggest serial rapist in history. Also, I never thought he was funny.

PLAYBOY: Who is funny to you?

MAHER: I love Jerry Seinfeld's show *Comedians in Cars Getting Coffee*.

Leave it to Seinfeld to deconstruct the talk show and do it in a way we haven't seen before. I did my first episode this spring. There's lots of other good stuff. *Veep* is very funny. Mindy Kaling. Everything Key and Peele say is so spot-on. They're the funniest laugh-out-loud comedians out there right now.

PLAYBOY: You continue to perform stand-up in towns around America. But why do a gig in, say, Macon, Georgia, when you could be kicking back on a beach somewhere?

MAHER: It's a strange obsession, but there's nothing more fun than owning a room and making people laugh, if that's in your DNA. I feel like I'm redeeming myself for all the years I did stand-up and didn't enjoy it, because it was terrible at first.

It's also my civic duty as a liberal. I tend to go to red states, and it gets liberals especially hyped up to find me there. They look around and see 3,000 people and say, "I'm not alone. I thought I was the only one." Then again, in some places in the South, you wouldn't even know it was the South. I was afraid to go to Alabama and Mississippi for a while, but have you seen Birmingham? They have Thai food and Pottery Barn and fancy coffee now.

PLAYBOY: Those sound like gateway drugs to legalized same-sex marriage.

MAHER: *[Laughs]* Same-sex marriage has been sweeping across the land very quickly, that's for sure. What is it – 37 states right now? I think the Republicans will be thrilled when the Supreme Court takes that off their plates. America has moved past the point that it cares anymore. America progresses. That's not to say we don't have holdouts. Christians still talk about gay marriage as if

it puts their marriages in danger. The gays are the enemy. Things are changing, whether these pious, self-righteous Christians like it or not.

PLAYBOY: The church is changing too, though you've given the pope mixed reviews.

MAHER: Pope Frank has done a lot. He's been a breath of fresh air on a lot of issues, and he's been an old-school asshole on a bunch of them too. He's a good politician. Every time he comes out with something progressive, he'll come out with something completely backward. Like he just came out strongly in favor of exorcism to keep his base happy. He's like, "You know what, I'll throw them some red meat. It doesn't hurt anybody. I'll just say I'm for exorcism." Oh, come on! You're this sophisticated Argentinean. You know damn well the devil isn't inside there. Do you really believe that shit, Frank?

PLAYBOY: You must be thrilled about the changing marijuana laws here in the US. Did you think we'd actually be legalizing pot across the country?

MAHER: *[Laughs]* I've been on the front lines of that fight for a long time. It's amazing how things have shifted. People used to say, "Aren't you worried you'll be arrested for saying you're going to smoke after the show?" They were honestly living in fear for me. And now the idea that you could be arrested. In Los Angeles! It's de facto legal in California.

PLAYBOY: How has the quality of weed improved?

MAHER: When you've been smoking pot for 40 years, none of it works great. I don't smoke that much – just enough to make me high. But it must be getting better, because once in a while I'll smoke with some newbie and they'll be bouncing off the walls, saying how *amaaaaazing* the pot is. The pot experience is improving somewhat. I now get pot with a card, which is better than the old way, when you had to make conversation with your dirtbag drug dealer, but still sort of ridiculous in a free society. Now I can get it if I go to a "doctor"

and get a "prescription" that says I have a "disease." But this is really just "don't ask, don't tell" for pot. It creates a culture of dishonesty and gives a bad name to people like me who genuinely suffer from whatever it is I told them I had. *[laughs]*

PLAYBOY: Who's your favorite guest?

MAHER: Oh, I never answer that question, but okay. Salman Rushdie. I feel he is the epitome of what my show was supposed to be about from the beginning. He's a witty public intellectual. Unafraid, he's great on every topic. He's the perfect mix of intelligence and witty repartee. It's a shame we don't have more people in America like that. Again, I suppose people are spending too much time on Instagram and porn.

PLAYBOY: Speaking of porn, any opinion on what it means that every pubescent kid with his mother's phone now has access to a limitless video library of outrageous sex?

MAHER: I know. It must be strange and a little confusing to be a teenager now. My introduction to sexuality was PLAYBOY and the magazines I would spirit away when I was babysitting. When I was 12 to 14, the dad at the house would have a stack of PLAYBOYs, and we would steal them and bury them in the woods, dig them up later and look at them. We liked to look at boobies. Was that such a terrible thing? And by the way, as we got older, we'd read about the issues of the day. It's amazing to me. Even at this point you sometimes have to defend Hugh Hefner to people who think he's a pornographer. I go, "Really? Have you seen the magazine?" He's been on the forefront of so many issues and really stuck his neck out on feminism, civil rights, free speech, gay rights. Today, the stuff kids have access to is fucking unbelievable. The idea that you can sit in the backseat on the way to school with an iPhone and watch six Japanese businessmen coming on the face of a girl who has a squid up her vagina – I mean, Jesus! These kids must be so jaded. We should be afraid. What does it do to



relationships, how you relate to a girl? That doesn't mean I wouldn't have watched that stuff if it was around when I was a kid.

PLAYBOY: When did you first know you were a comedian?

MAHER: I remember making my relatives laugh at a Christmas party when I was six or seven by doing an impression of Tommy Smothers from the Smothers Brothers. By high school I was already years into plotting to be a comedian. After taping Johnny Carson's "Tea Time" movie sketches with my little Wollensak tape recorder, I would transcribe them word for word. I still have them, in pencil on loose-leaf paper. Later, I lifted material from Johnny when I emceed something called "The Pop Show" as a senior, my first hosting experience – and the last the school would see of "The Pop Show," since many parents were upset with some of the jokes. I did not, at 17, realize Carson's late-night humor was inappropriate for introducing teenage girls whose parents were in the audience. I remember doing the lines "She's going to do the Dance of the Virgins – which she performs from memory" and "She squeezed a lemon into a man's drink with her knees."

PLAYBOY: That's talent. Now she'd probably do something with a selfie stick.

MAHER: I'm all for selfies or whatever will get people to stop asking for pictures with me. My life got a lot better when I learned to politely say no to that. It always seems like it should take just a few seconds, and it never does. I like to look people in the eye, say, "Sorry, no pictures, but how about a handshake

and let's live in the moment." I've almost never had anyone who was too disappointed by that and many who were happy to be reminded that there's such a thing as the present.

PLAYBOY: You've done very well for yourself. Do you overspend on anything?

MAHER: Not really. I don't have any expensive hobbies. I don't collect cars or motorcycles. The last big thing I bought was a piece of the Mets. That didn't come cheap, but I think it's the best investment in the world. Nothing goes up like sports teams. They never go down. Every time they sell a team, the sellers come with a number and the buyers pay more. They sold the Dodgers for more than \$2 billion. If the Dodgers are worth \$2 billion, I can't imagine what the Mets are worth. The Yankees are worth at least \$5 billion, and George Steinbrenner bought the team in 1973 for \$10 million. I read in the paper about the Mets being for sale, and I jumped on it. I'm not sure why more people didn't do it. *[laughs]* And when the Mets make it to the World Series this coming season, of course I'll have box seats for that.

PLAYBOY: You're also on the board of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, but you still eat meat.

MAHER: True, but I don't eat a lot of meat, and I don't have to be in lockstep with everything PETA says. PETA stands for the ethical treatment of animals, and I believe in that. Trust me, I eat only chickens that have died after a long illness after resting comfortably at Cedars-Sinai. *[laughs]* I'm actually concerned about what people put into their bodies. Doctors never ask what we eat. The top prescription drugs are digestive aids to put out the fire in our gut. One reason we have such an insanely high national health care bill is we make ourselves sick by eating shit.

PLAYBOY: You've said the same thing about vaccines. Now that measles is making a comeback, are you changing your anti-vaccine stance?

MAHER: I've never argued that

vaccines don't work. I just don't think you need them. There are so many maladies now that used to be rare and now are much more prevalent – things like allergies, ADD, asthma, migraines, autoimmune disorders, chronic fatigue, colitis, more colds. I'm not saying vaccines cause any of them, but the modern immune system might be less robust than it used to be because it doesn't get its full workout going through a disease like the measles. And that combined with environmental factors – pollution and pesticides and eating tons of sugar and crap and God knows what else in the modern world – might be something to look into. We compartmentalize and study pieces sometimes but not the whole. I'm glad vaccines exist, just like I'm glad antibiotics exist, but we've abused the hell out of them. Bugs that no antibiotic works on anymore? I worry about that a lot more.

PLAYBOY: What if you're wrong? What if terrible, preventable diseases spread because people reject rational science and choose not to immunize their kids?

MAHER: I'm a rationalist too, and I'm rational about the fact that science doesn't always add up. They now recommend about 70 shots, plus flu shots, by the age of 18 – triple what it was in 1983. Is any number okay? Many vaccines are given simultaneously, sometimes as many as 10 shots per visit, and studies have yet to evaluate such simultaneous shots. Also, a large long-term study comparing the long-term health outcomes of vaccinated and unvaccinated groups of people has never been done. Plus, they're often ineffective. This last flu shot was only 23 percent effective. So then it's bullshit. It's a moneymaking scam for big pharma.

PLAYBOY: What would shock us about you if the North Koreans hacked into your computer?

MAHER: Nothing. First of all, they wouldn't find any incriminating emails. I've always been paranoid about that. Don't put anything in an

email that you don't want everybody to see. But I also have several computers: one that I write on, one I send email on. I would never write anything private on something that's plugged into the real world. Plus, I keep the important stuff in fireproof cabinets – very top of the line. It's where I store everything: years of jokes and writing, letters, my old baseball card collection, my Beatles wig, the German bayonet my mother brought home from World War II that I wanted so badly and she gave me when I was 13.

PLAYBOY: You've never been married, never had kids. Do you ever wish there were a little Billy Maher around?

MAHER: No. One of the great things about being my age is that fatherhood is off the table. Oh, you can do it, but I don't think it's morally right. You won't be around. Or if you are around, do you really want to be at the kid's high school graduation when you're 80? You also have to feel it. You have to be able to trade your life for your kids. Anything short of that is selfish and a disservice to the child. If you don't want to do that, don't make the child suffer with a half-there, half-assed parent, which is what I'd be. I like my life. I don't want to trade it for anything.

PLAYBOY: You've said you don't believe in heaven or hell, but do you have any quick ideas for your tombstone?

MAHER: Yeah. "What Was That All About?" *[laughs]* I certainly don't want to be buried. Burn me, cremate me. I don't want to be worm food or get eaten by maggots. But more than that, I don't want to fucking die. I want Ray Kurzweil to come up with the singularity in the next 20 or 30 years before I go so I can keep going. I don't understand these people who say they don't want to live forever. I don't want to go! Being dead does not sound like that much fun, and right now I'm having a great time. ♫



SHORTCUT

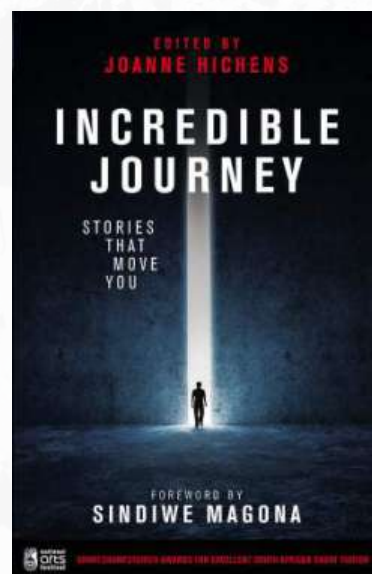
BY BOBBY JORDAN

Some might say a rattling sound near the gearbox of a 20-year-old 1400 Nissan bakkie is all the more reason to turn around and head back. On the other hand, one heard so many rattlings in a 20-year-old 1400 Nissan bakkie that only a fool would stop for every one, especially a driver with a world-record rooster to sell.

Pieter Kloppers was not an adventurous man. When he looked back on his life, all forty-seven years of it, most of it not unhappy, he saw a life defined by risks skilfully avoided, not opportunities taken. In the dusty immensity of everything past, Kloppers knew his footsteps followed paths well-trod; his journey was a quiet meandering to the sea.

He was about to change all that.

He had set off at first light from his home in Middelburg with as many of his finest roosters as he could fit into the back of his blue Nissan 1400 bakkie. He had felt quite certain his wallet would be similarly packed tight with R100 notes by the time he made his return journey in a week's time, having sold his stock at the Rini market in Grahamstown just like he did every October. There was no reason to believe this year's profits would be any worse than last October, or the October



before that.

His optimism was partly explained by a newspaper headline he had spotted in the *Eastern Cape Gazette* at a filling station outside Middelburg: **RETAIL SPENDING SPREE EXPECTED THIS XMAS.**

Kloppers was no fan of the *Eastern Cape Gazette* on account of their liberal use of the female form on their front page, but on this occasion he had felt a surge of affection towards the much-maligned tabloid. The headline had added to his overall sense of wellbeing, and he had resumed his journey in what could be described as a state of benign mathematics – gentle calculation with a recurring, positive outcome. He had travelled a hundred kilometres in this manner, buoyed by the knowledge that this October's rooster profit could be considerably more than any profit he had ever made. He had felt so sure of this that he had treated himself to a T-bone steak with a double portion of hot chips at the Cradock Spur. Normally he did not indulge his appetite on long business trips for fear of eating into his profits. After all, Kloppers was not a fat-cat pivot farmer from Colesberg; he was a poultry farmer from Middelburg with margins tighter than a koeksister and a debt mountain on his land so high there was cloud on top – and not the fluffy white kind.

But on this occasion Kloppers had lingered at the Cradock Spur long enough to polish off two tall beers, and the night sky was just a few twinkles short of a miracle when he set off again in the direction of the Southern Cross.

For once all of his concerns seemed a million miles away, and were it not for a neon sign up ahead that caught his eye he would have sailed deeper into that inky Karoo night without a care in the world, man and bakkie adrift in a starry infinite embrace.

It flashed past in less than a second; immediately he wished he hadn't seen it. Standard issue South African National Roads Agency, it showed an antelope launching itself into thin air, pitch black against a white background, framed by an iridescent red triangle.

It wasn't just any antelope; it was a kudu.

The road sign weighed heavily on Kloppers as he continued on the lonely N10 arterial towards Grahamstown.

Instead of the invincible, fluttery feeling of impending wealth he had known for most of the trip, he now felt a sneaking regret that he had spent so long at the Cradock Spur. As a result he was running late.

Kloppers was not an adventurous man but he had eaten enough kilometres in his time to know that running late in kudu country meant only one thing: trouble.

And so without further delay he pulled over onto the shoulder of the N10 on the outskirts of Cradock, the endless N10 that lengthens into the night and slides eerily straight between sentinel mielie fields; that seems to roll and roll and unfold all the way across the Eastern Cape before dropping down the escarpment onto the windswept coastal belt.

Having parked a safe distance off the road, Kloppers got out of his car and

come out on top.

He walked around to the rear of the bakkie and opened the canopy. He did so carefully, taking care not to startle his precious cargo. The roosters, arranged in separate wire cages to prevent any en-route hostilities, clucked and cackled and craned their necks to see what fate had in store. Right in the centre stood Big Foot, Kloppers's pride and joy. A rare breeding rooster whose enormous scarlet comb and four-inch wattle had earned him considerable fame in and around Middelburg.

As Kloppers peered into the back of the bakkie Big Foot raised his wings and cocked his head, almost like a curtsy. Kloppers found this vaguely disconcerting, for he had come to believe that somehow the bird considered himself the star of the show,

not just in the farmyard but wherever he went. And the thing about this was that it was true: Big Foot *was* the sole reason for the nearly 400-kilometre cross-country trek to Grahamstown, where in all likelihood he would be sold for at least R25,000.

There was something about the bird's gait, about the thick splatter of disembodied wings and legs protruding from its beak as it gorged on flying ants coming in the window, about the way it gazed with its menacing beady eyes, that indicated the bird had somehow acquired insight into its elevated status in the agrarian pecking order.

Kloppers didn't like to admit it, but technically speaking the bird was worth more than he was.

Having closed the canopy door, Kloppers turned his attention to the underside of his car. He wriggled in beneath the exhaust to see if he could spot anything that might explain the unusual rattling noise he'd heard since turning onto the coarse tar of the N10, a noise that had started to erode the edges of his pleasant mood over the past couple of hours. But he could see nothing under the car, so he switched off the headlights and walked a few yards into the night, as he always did when he needed to clear his head.

In front of him a full-moon landscape rose up to a distant mountain ridge, the rocks there glistening beneath a gentle drift

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walked around to the bonnet. The front grill was a mash of trapped insects, some still twitching. Likewise the sides of his windscreen where the wipers couldn't reach were encrusted with insect pulp – thoraxes, legs, compound eyes – a familiar chamber of horrors when driving through the Albany District of the Eastern Cape, where the summer night was thick with the screams of the damned and the dying. Here were ten billion winged armies, pillaging, cannibalising and devouring each other, locked in the ceaseless battle to endure.

As he scraped away at a layer of flying ant goo stuck to his windscreen wiper, Kloppers felt he too was doing his bit to

of cloud. All around was the high-pitched hiss of cicadas, a descant of frogs and night birds, and occasionally an owl or wildcat solo to complete the symphony. It was hard to believe there lurked danger here, amidst so much beauty.

However Kloppers had endured enough anxious harvests to know that beauty is just a respite from fear, a chance to catch your breath beneath the moon before flying head-first into something mean.

He had barely filled his lungs with the sweet-scented night when his symphony took on a more sinister tone. Unclear at first, the sound quickened, then deepened, until there came from several directions the unmistakable eerie rasping cough, of a fully-grown male kudu.

Kloppers turned and hurried back to his car.

to Grahamstown as quickly as possible, in time to claim a prime stall at the Grahamstown market; on the other hand he was travelling late at night in an area where leaping kudu were as endemic as ant hills and thorn bushes. Only the very foolish or the very desperate risked driving after midnight across the belly of the rural Eastern Cape.

And that, unfortunately, was exactly the belly Kloppers wanted to drive across.

Just a few kilometres down the road was an inconspicuous turn-off, the start of a route known simply as the Bedford Road. This was by far the quickest route to Grahamstown, passing through Bedford and bisecting the Gamtoos Mountains via the Dwarrelwind Pass. Yes there were potholes, some of them legendary for swallowing unsuspecting motorists and

pretty art student on her way back from her 21st party in Somerset East. All had gambled on the Bedford road late at night. All were now dead, killed by a handsomely striped kudu crashing through their windscreen. The unfortunate fact was that the disintegrating farming district town of Bedford, with no functioning petrol station and a population too small to field a rugby side, was the epicentre of the global kudu empire.

And the Bedford road was their main flight path.

As he liked to do at times of great stress, Kloppers studied himself carefully in his rearview mirror.

Without doubt the man he saw there was slightly fearful – that much was clear from his eyes, which were a lot wider than normal. His face irritated him; it was a guilty face, a cowardly face. A face that should have known better than to linger over a T-bone steak at the Cradock Spur when there was still such a long road ahead. It was the face of a man who even during the day had always taken the safer N10 route to Grahamstown via Cradock rather than risk the Bedford Road.

It occurred to Kloppers that this cowardly face was possibly the reason why he still had to schlep halfway across the country to sell his wares, unlike more adventurous businessmen who would never let a mere kudu get in the way of business success.

It occurred to Kloppers that just maybe the biggest danger was not the kudu jumping on the road, but the kudu jumping around inside his head.

As if to emphasise this point, just then a shooting star took off across the twittering sky, disappearing just about where the Bedford Road cuts through the Gamtoos Mountains above the Dwarrelwind Pass. Kloppers felt a surge of gratitude towards the great unknown which appeared to have his best interests at heart: here was a sign that he was meant to finally conquer his fears and find his own way across the mountains. Here was a sign that it was finally time to take the Bedford Road.

So without further ado, Kloppers turned the ignition once more, gunned the engine, and took off down the N10.

Five kilometres later he turned left onto the Bedford Road.

Now that he was moving again, Kloppers felt more relaxed. The motion of the tar streaming beneath his feet, the cloak of stars draped overhead, and the sweet Eastern Cape air infused with sleeping rainstorm, were intoxicating to him, so



Back in the driver's seat he instinctively fastened the seatbelt. He turned the ignition, revved the engine, but sat idling by the side of the road for several seconds, unsure of what to do next. Then he killed the engine and leaned back with his arms folded. Deep in his chest he felt the first bilious stab of solitude as he took stock of a situation that was, he realised, deeply ironic: he was trapped in the kudu horns of a dilemma. On the one hand he needed to make up for lost time and get

trapping small game, but the careful driver could avoid these and shave nearly a hundred kilometres off his journey to the south.

By day the Bedford Road was recognised, for those who knew it, as the greatest shortcut in the entire Eastern Cape.

Driving it at night, however, was considered a form of suicide.

Everybody had heard the stories: Kaizer Mtata from Mamelodi outside Pretoria; the Barnard family from Springs; the

much so that for a moment his concerns seemed mere trifles in the face of such majesty.

For several minutes, humming along the empty Bedford Road towards the Gamtoos Mountains at a steady 110km/h, Kloppers experienced what he would later recall as the most profound euphoria he'd ever known.

Gone was the agony of indecision, which, he now realised, had been a lifelong affliction no less debilitating than the effect of too many Black Labels from the Bush Tavern outside Middelburg. The simple act of turning onto the Bedford Road, of doing something different and daring, rather than languishing in the same old Kloppers groove, made his spirit soar.

The beaming face accompanying him in the rearview mirror now looked a happier sight, too: the refracted light off the dashboard that half an hour ago had cast an eerie light over his broad forehead – he was losing his hair – and sun-cracked lips now lent him an air of superhero mystery. He liked the new Kloppers, and the new Kloppers liked him.

'Not bad at all, Kloppers – for somebody like you,' he commended himself in the slightly menacing tone he had appropriated during his national service days from a notorious commandant – a tone he now employed in rare and unexpected moments of triumph. 'Not bad for a plaasjapie from the Groot Karoo.'

He had just moved on to admiring a confident new aspect of his bushy Karoo eyebrows when, rather ominously, the rattle coming from his gearbox gave way to a more urgent clattering sound. He ignored it and tried to concentrate on the road, which had climbed up a short mountain pass veering southeast onto a grassland plateau. In the rearview mirror he thought he could make out the lights of Cradock receding against the inky, endless Karoo. But to his dismay he realised that what he assumed was the inky endless Karoo was in fact Big Foot's award-winning comb, now obscuring the view. The rooster had turned in his cage and was peering into the driver's cabin. The comb irritated Kloppers, as did Big Foot's high-pitched cackle, for the bird was clearly not happy.

'Eyes right, Kloppers!' he barked. 'No need to worry about that bird. Just keep driving and everything will be okay.'

But the more Kloppers tried to keep driving, the less everything seemed okay: the engine, a moment ago purring so pleasingly, now seemed to cough and

splutter; the grinding beneath his feet had got noticeably worse; and with every slight jerk or vibration of the steering wheel the

BIOGRAPHY

Bobby Jordan

Bobby Jordan is a Cape Town-based journalist and frustrated short-story writer. His work has appeared in a variety of newspapers, magazines and anthologies, and his short fiction has been short-listed for the PEN/Studzinski Literary Award three times.

This is the second time he's made the Short.Sharp. Stories cut; his ghostly tale of lust and revenge, "The Uniondale Road," was published in *Adults Only* (it could well have qualified for this anthology too).

Of "Shortcut" he says, "There is more than a faint whiff of autobiography here. For an interesting period the Bedford Road used to be a late-night favorite, a transition zone between Joburg and Grahamstown, where I could slide back into the world of kudu and porcupines and ghosts in the headlights – the proverbial walk on the wild side. There was also a memorable mechanical anomaly on the road between Gaborone and Zeerust. Somehow these moments got strung together in my head, with some extra moonshine added to the mix."

pestilential Big Foot encroached further into the cabin, until it seemed the bird was not peering through the window but perched on his collar-bone.

Kloppers could almost hear the kommandant's indignation: 'Kloppers! What the hell is that chicken doing on your shoulder! God damn it, man! Pull yourself together!'

Kloppers was not a religious man but he was beginning to see how all these unexpected annoyances might seem like the meddling hand of the Divine. Like some kind of test. Maybe the Big Kommandant in the Sky also liked to sew a few seeds of doubt whenever a conscript found a shortcut to success. If Kloppers was to be the master of his own destiny he would surely have to rise above the chattering perturbations designed to test his resolve. Anything less would be far too easy.

Yet the more he tried to focus on his bold new world view, the louder became the chattering perturbations tossed his way, particularly the rattling noise beneath his feet. He had heard this noise before, and he didn't like it. He didn't like it because it was the rather ominous gearbox sort of rattling noise that a 20-year-old 1400 Nissan bakkie makes every 100,000 kilometres or so.

Some might say a rattling sound near the gearbox of a 20-year-old 1400 Nissan bakkie is all the more reason to turn around and head back to Cradock.

On the other hand, one heard so many rattlings in a 20-year-old 1400 Nissan bakkie that only a fool would stop for every one, especially a driver with a world-record rooster to sell. In fact a rattling sound from a bakkie gearbox was all the more reason to keep moving until that rooster was safely delivered and not stranded in some God-forsaken dead-end Karoo dorpje, like Cradock.

With this in mind Kloppers put his foot down on the accelerator, hoping the extra speed might drown out the gearbox noise. It worked: the mechanical cacophony from the bakkie's straining engine rose up and eclipsed the gearbox noise as the car gathered speed down a gently sloping valley. Kloppers kept a watchful eye on the speedometer: 120km/h, 125 km/h, 130km/h. A sudden speed-wobble caused him to tighten his grip on the gear stick, and he changed into fifth.

As it happened Kloppers knew a great deal about gearboxes on account of two or three similar incidents over the years. Once a gearbox started to deteriorate, it was not easy to fix: it was, in fact, an ugly

affair. A gearbox died gradually, piece by piece, and amateur patch-ups did little to arrest the overall decline. A steady rattle such as that accompanying Kloppers along the Bedford Road was the first sign that a gearbox was on its way out. A rattle could last several hours or several months, but if left unattended it always had the same result: the driver made one gear change too many, and the gearbox fell apart.

And when a gearbox fell apart it was generally spectacular, always late at night, mostly at high speed in the middle of nowhere, leaving the driver marooned in a transport conundrum: keep going without a gearbox and try to reach a mechanic, or pull over and wait for a new gearbox to arrive.

The nasty clash of metal that was Kloppers' final gear change in the moonlit Bedford Valley just a moment ago left him in no doubt that he too was now marooned in this same transport conundrum.

Distressing minutes looped away as Kloppers tried to come to terms with his situation. Fortunately the terrain was flat, meaning he could maintain his current cruising speed. But this would not last. Between him and the Grahamstown market lay the small matter of the Dwarrelwind Pass.

He doubted whether anybody had ever attempted the Dwarrelwind Pass without a gearbox, at 120km/h.

For the umpteenth time since leaving Middelburg, Kloppers checked in with the face in the mirror, hoping for some moral support. The steely expression of earlier was still there, albeit a more wizened expression, with one or two frown lines showing on the wide forehead. Kloppers pointed an accusing finger into the night and announced that, as far as he was concerned, with a current speed of around 120km/h and no more gear changes, he was now stuck in what English people called a Catch-22 situation: when whatever you do only makes things worse. Or was he stuck in a more serious situation when even doing nothing would make things worse? Kloppers wondered what the English would call that kind of situation.

'I think very fucked situation would about sum it up,' commented the face in the mirror, dryly.

As if the situation wasn't fucked enough, Kloppers heard a strange new knocking sound coming from the rear of the car; it was Big Foot, now enraged, pecking the glass window as if eager to put an end to this cross-country madness. Kloppers smacked the window with the back of his hand. 'Just bugger off, Big Foot!' he yelled,

glaring at the bird. 'Yes, we're in shit, okay? Are you satisfied?'

Strangely Big Foot did look satisfied, and cocked his head briefly, quizzically, before pecking at the window even more furiously than before.

Ten minutes clattered past; it felt like half an hour. As much as Kloppers tried to keep his mind focused on the curvature of the road, he couldn't help noticing the first shivers of dread creeping up his spine. Had he made the wrong decision? Had he been a fool to break from his usual routine? Maybe the universe was punishing him for his impertinence.

Irritated by his thoughts he resolved to concentrate more fixedly on the road, which still rushed effortlessly towards him

at least halfway to Bedford by now, and still not a single car had passed in either direction. His little bakkie, now rattling along the Bedford road like a runaway drum kit, was the only evidence of human life for miles around. This was not a good sign, and it reminded Kloppers about the one thing more troublesome than a suspect gearbox: a kudu.

The emptiness of the Bedford road looked remarkably like the kind of emptiness a kudu would like to leap into, judging by all the kudu stories he now recalled.

That kudu liked to jump around after sunset was common knowledge; there were several theories why this was so.

Some believed they were naturally curious animals; when they saw something interesting they came closer to take a look. It was easy to imagine how the unusual sight of a car late at night along the Bedford Road – where virtually nothing happens after dark – might pique the interest of a bored insomniac kudu with nothing better to do than leap closer to an unusual light clattering through the veld.

Others said the kudu was easily startled; when it heard a car pass it panicked, and leapt into the air. And the peculiar thing about the kudu as opposed to other buck species was that when startled it always seemed to leap towards the very thing that startled it, not away from it.

Kloppers was fairly certain that only a severely deaf and dumb kudu could be startled by his ageing bakkie, which, thanks to the gearbox problem and a three-inch hole in the silencer, could generally be heard from ten kilometres away. Any kudu in the Bedford vicinity would be a good few miles off by the time his disintegrating bakkie rolled into sight.

He glanced at his wristwatch: twenty to one in the morning. At least one thing was crystal clear: stuck in fourth gear at 120km/h there could be no turning back, and no stopping at the side of the road either, because he was now officially in the absolute middle of nowhere, at least two thirds of the way to Bedford, from where he'd still have another treacherous swerve through the Dwarrelwind Pass to Grahamstown.

He thought about the route up ahead. Bedford itself didn't present too many problems; there would be only one stop street – and what were the chances of bumping into a car at 2:00am in a town that fell asleep at 7:00pm? Or should he stop in Bedford? No, that would not be

SHORT. SHARP. *Stories.*

The Short.Sharp.Stories Awards for South African short-story fiction are presented each year by the National Arts Festival.

It is the aim of these awards to encourage, support, and showcase established and emerging South African writing talent. The Awards are curated by Joanne Hichens. PLAYBOY South Africa is delighted to bring you the first in a series of short stories from this year's anthology, *Incredible Journey*.

at a steady 120km/h. With his headlights on bright, he could see about forty metres ahead – a gently undulating stream of tar, flanked on either side by long dry grass and the occasional tree, usually an acacia or wit stinkhout draped with Old Man's Beard. Every few minutes a field mouse zipped across the road, causing Kloppers's heart to skip a beat.

Most distressing, however, was the emptiness; Kloppers guesstimated he was

sensible; the only other person he'd heard about stranded on the Bedford road had ended up very dead and tied to the back of a farmer's 3-litre Toyota 4x4 double-cab. The colour of a man's skin could still get you killed in this part of the world, and Kloppers had more than a touch of the tar-brush in his Middelburg hide.

So best to keep going.

To calm his nerves Kloppers turned on the radio, hoping for distraction. Nothing. Or next to nothing: the only signal

he could find was the preacher channel from Bloemfontein featuring some idiot fulminating about the Invisible Hand of God and how He did not miss a thing in the tawdry affairs of man. Kloppers had decided that if there was an Invisible Hand of God meddling with his road trip, it was not benevolent.

Nevertheless Kloppers kept listening in the hope that the preacher would distract him from his woes as the bakkie rampaged towards Bedford.

And so the poultry farmer and his prized fowl from Middelburg glided through the stiff-necked aloes and prickly pears of the Albany District, the truck a tiny speck of light driven by the wind, the world a gaping wilderness of fresh dust and stale starlight.

Ten minutes passed but Kloppers was feeling no better. The preacher on the radio had digressed from the Invisible Hand into a lengthy exposition about the healing power of prayer, and Kloppers could not resist composing a little impromptu prayer of his own concerning the future of the kudu species and how God might enjoy slicing them up into celestial sosaties; and perhaps He could take that god-damn chicken too and use him as a feather-duster – anything to stop

HE WALKED AROUND TO THE rear of the bakkie

AND OPENED THE CANOPY.
HE DID SO CAREFULLY,
TAKING CARE NOT TO STARTLE
HIS PRECIOUS CARGO.

the insane pecking sound as the bird kept hammering away at the canopy window.

Just then a distant flash of lightning to the north seemed to confirm his concerns that God, if there was such a thing, did not have an Invisible Hand but rather a scorching fist with which to pummel the affairs of man. A second flash of lightning, a much bigger flash that lit up a mile-high bank of thundercloud, raised more immediate concerns: what would it be like to be stuck in fourth gear weaving up the Dwarrelwind Pass in the middle of a torrential midnight thunderstorm, with one windscreen wiper? It would be unpleasant.

Even with two windscreen wipers visibility in heavy rain would be almost zero, which meant almost zero chance of seeing a kudu in the road. Add to that the common knowledge that thunderstorms made kudu even more jumpy than their naturally jumpy state. Driving under such conditions would be suicide. Kloppers glanced at his speedometer. Without realising it he'd sped-up to around 125km/h, no doubt spurred on by the storm which was also travelling fast – and gaining on him. The roadside grass now swirled and bowed in a strong breeze. Leaves soared and smacked against the windscreen. From afar came the pregnant smell of wet veld, of a million

harvests and a thousand swollen rivers. Usually a thing of wonder, the storm now seemed a fearful, predatory beast. The flowing headlight tableau of treetops, cats' eyes and twinkling stars that seemed so eerily calm half an hour ago now threatened to tear apart at the seams, as if the whole thing might peel away and take off like an old newspaper, with the bakkie in tow.

Thankful that he was at least travelling with the wind, not against it, Kloppers adjusted his rearview mirror to get a better look at the storm. Lightning flickered like a Thohoyandou streetlamp, each flash reflecting back onto his face, which now appeared ghoulish, the

whites of his eyes shining like marbles set into his sun-scorched Middelburg face.

But it was a brave face, an adventurer's face, the face of someone who no longer cared what time he got to Grahamstown so long as he got there on his own terms, steering his way across the shadow-land of jittery kudu that lay between the sun, the moon and the Gamtoos Mountains, as they all swirled endlessly towards the sea.

A crash of lightning above the bakkie startled Kloppers out of his reverie, and now the heavens opened. Rain slammed against the windscreen in solid sheets, and a vicious wind swiped at the canopy, causing Kloppers to veer dangerously close to the grassy left shoulder of the road. Big Foot's floppy comb lurched from side to side, but each time he shot back to the window to resume his pecking.

Against the rain the bakkie's sole windscreen wiper was no use at all; Kloppers craned his neck forward to see the tar. Still he drove on, his tyres skidding dangerously in the water damming up on the road. 'I've come this far,' he said to himself, 'Goddamn it, I'm going to drive over those mountains if it kills me.'

And so Kloppers pushed his foot against the accelerator pedal, bracing himself, hardly looking through the windscreen any more



2015 ANTHOLOGY

INCREDIBLE JOURNEY

The Short.Sharp.Stories Awards for South African short-story fiction are presented each year by the National Arts Festival.

An anthology of selected stories is published annually, with the theme set for writers differing from year to year. The winning stories, selected from the stories to be published, by a panel of independent judges, are announced at an annual launch event at the National Arts Festival in Grahamstown.

Incredible Journey is the third of the annual SHORT.SHARP.STORIES anthologies.

Following the crime-thrillers of *Bloody Satisfied* (2013) and erotic tales of *Adults Only* (2014), the focus in 2015 is on a journey, be it political, personal or emotional.

The incredible journeys of this year's title vary from road trips to mind trips, and are by turns inspirational, intriguing and entertaining. Those that have made this year's shortlist have two things in common: 1) as in previous collections, they capture uniquely South African voices, and 2) they move the reader.

The judges of this year's competition are Henrietta Rose-Innes, Ken Barris and Makhosazana Xaba, with a foreword to the collection by Sindiwe Magona.

Joanne Hichens, curator of the SHORT.SHARP.STORIES awards, is an author, editor and creative-writing teacher. She has edited four short-story anthologies, including *Bloody Satisfied* and *Adults Only*. Her first novel *Divine Justice* was published in 2011; her second is due out later in 2015.

but rather at himself in the rearview mirror, as if for the last time, his eyes no longer afraid, his mind a blank, his life a 1,400 torpedo of man and poultry hurtling blindly into a billowing curtain, a tempest, that would deliver or destroy. If life was a short hell-ride into oncoming wind then did it really matter what you did behind the steering wheel? Did it really matter if you turned left or right or just kept gunning the engine until you vaulted over the Dwarrelwind Pass with a piece of Kokerboom in your soul? Did anything really matter at all? The Middelburg farmer closed his eyes and slammed the accelerator pedal down flat.

The steering-wheel shook, the gearbox roared, the tyres skidded left then right. Lightning smashed into the bushveld up ahead but Kloppers didn't notice. Neither did he notice his bakkie slowing down – 100km/h, 95km/h, 85km/h, 65km/h – and the more he slowed down the more the gearbox roared and shuddered in frenzy, until it seemed the engine must explode. Instead, it cut out, stone dead. The bakkie rolled to a standstill in the middle of the Bedford Road.

As quick as it had arrived, the storm vanished. The windscreen wiper beat

a lonely tune, backwards and forwards, cleaving the midnight anthem of crickets and frogs echoing through the Karoo. The clouds cleared, the moon came out, the stars twinkled down again in icy speckles of fear and wonder. In the back of the bakkie Big Foot clucked once and nestled his body into the grass on the floor of his cage. He tucked his head into his feathers and fell asleep.

Not the faintest breath of wind stirred the long grass on either side of the road.

The only other movement anywhere came from the dashboard – the fuel gauge.

The needle settled under the red.

The bakkie had run out of petrol.

Kloppers sat in his seat, hands glued to the steering wheel. A billion insects played in the golden headline beams that fanned into the night, lighting up the tar, the trees, the scattered leaves and two large shapes standing right in the middle of the road: kudu, big ones, standing over six feet tall.

Kloppers only had enough time to notice the iridescent glint in their eyes before, one by one, like sentinel angels, like diaphanous gatekeepers of the Bedford Road, they turned and circled away. ♫

THE 2016 SHORT.SHARP.STORIES *ENTRIES ARE NOW OPEN*

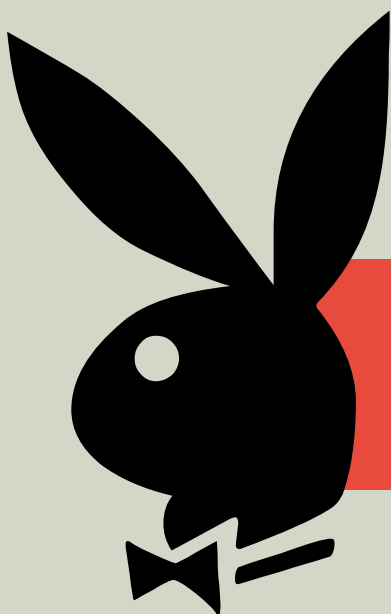
Short.Sharp.Stories has published crime fiction (*Bloody Satisfied*), sexy stories (*Adults Only*), and incredible journeys (*Incredible Journey*). Now it's time to have some fun!

The next title will be *Die Laughing*, a collection of stories to make you laugh, smile or simply nod in good-humored appreciation.

The competition encourages writers to poke a little fun at our crazy country. There are so many starting points for humor: our politics, our idiosyncrasies, our down-right ridiculous habits. There's plenty of opportunity to look on the lighter, brighter side of life and bring a "smile to our dial." Hilarity, a good old belly-laugh, or a little light-hearted fun is what they're looking for. And, of course, there's room for dark humor – for irony, satire and tragi-comedy – because humor at its best is often underscored by life's great disasters.

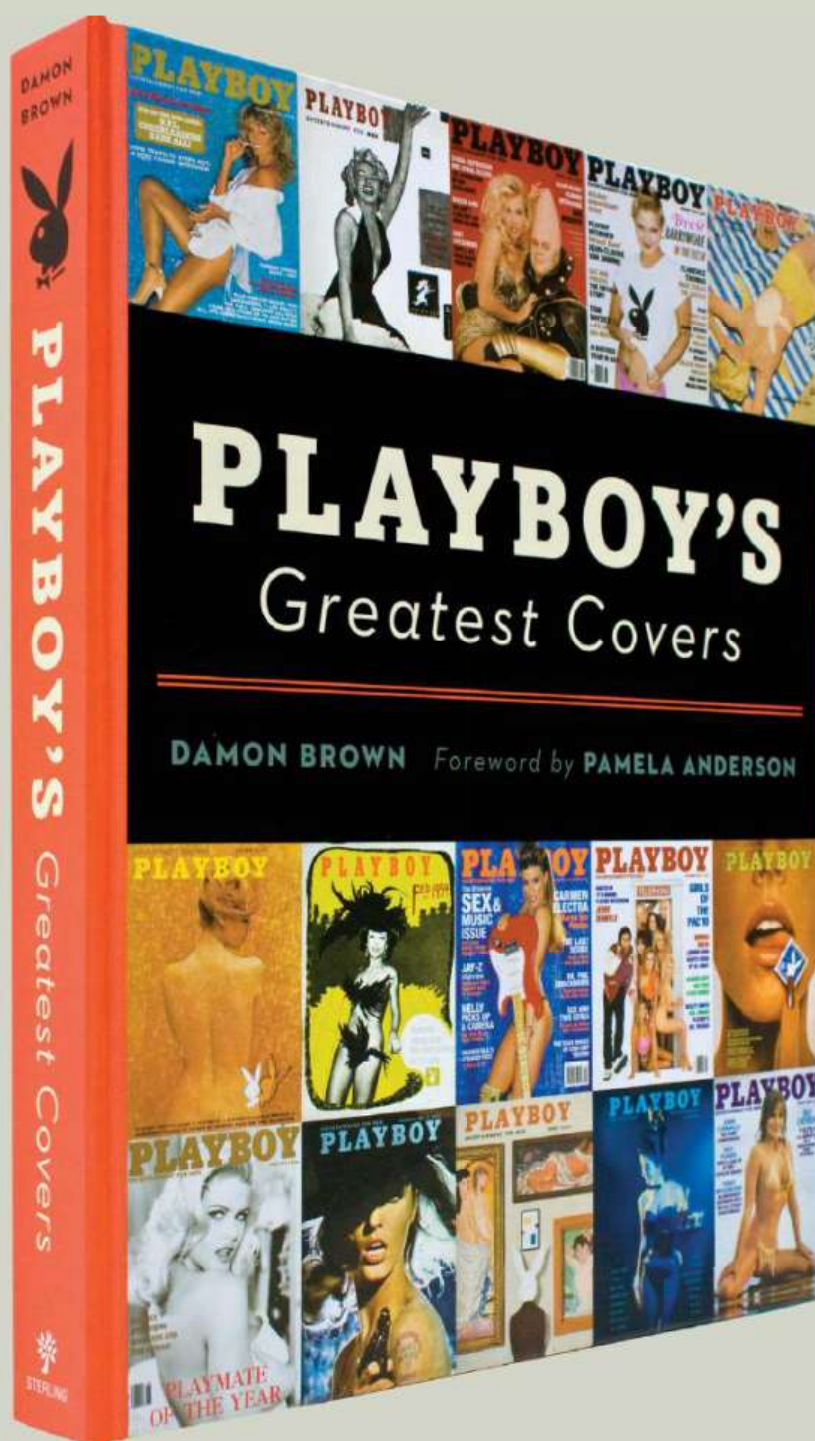
As ever, they're looking for originality, good writing, and for that special something that makes a story truly and proudly South African.

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THE
BALLAD
OF
JOHN JOE

NEVIN

BY TIM STRUBY

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ZED NELSON

BOXER JOHN JOE NEVIN HAS SEVEN IRISH AMATEUR NATIONAL TITLES AND A SILVER MEDAL FROM THE 2012 LONDON OLYMPICS. HE ALSO HAS TWO BROKEN LEGS COURTESY OF A COUSIN ALSO NAMED JOHN JOE NEVIN, WHICH IS ALL PART OF THE LIFE THAT COMES WITH BEING A TRAVELER, A.K.A. PIKEY, TINKER AND GYPSY. CAN NEVIN FIGHT HIS WAY OUT?



A typical late-summer afternoon in Ireland: mid-60s, windy, sunny, cloudy and a 99 percent chance of rain. I am in Mullingar, a town of 20,000 in Westmeath County, 50 kilometers from the geographic center of the Emerald Isle. Westmeath is not known for rolling hills or verdant landscapes about

which Yeats penned. There is no charming harbor or seaside vista as there is in Killarney or Kinsale. The land here is flat, the terrain the color of straw, and it's about as picturesque as the outskirts of Toledo. Thankfully I am not here for the scenery but to meet a boxer, a Mullingar-born-and-raised fighter who may become Ireland's next great champion.



A little past noon that boxer whips his blue BMW into the parking lot. He is John Joe Nevin, a winner of seven Irish amateur national titles and a silver medal in the 2012 London Olympics. The driver's window lowers. I see a warm countenance.

A gap-toothed smile. The unblemished face of a camera-flash-quick counterpuncher. "Hop in the back with the lads," John Joe chirps merrily.

The car is stuffy and hot, the air rife with Axe body spray. "So," continues John Joe, introducing his very own E, Turtle and Johnny Drama, "dis is my brother Paddy Boy, dis is my cousin David and dis is my other cousin, Joe." Like John Joe, they have crew cuts, sharp jawlines and garish tattoos. Unlike John Joe, they are not merry. They sit with legs spread and arms folded, saying nothing. While John Joe, 26, has fought across the globe from Kansas City to Kazakhstan, the others are far less comfortable around strangers.

The chilly reception isn't surprising. John Joe and the lads aren't your typical Irish but "travelers," also known – in varying degrees of derogatory parlance – as pavees, gypsies, knackers, tinkers and pikeys. Numbering an estimated 29,500 throughout Ireland, travelers are an ethnic minority who, for centuries, roamed the country and earned their livelihoods plying various trades and doing odd jobs. That has changed. Most of today's travelers have swapped their caravans for houses and have earned – fairly or not – a reputation for engaging in family feuds, drinking, bare-knuckle fighting, mooching off the state and making money in less honorable ways (stealing, scams, etc). Internationally, thanks to Guy Ritchie's 2000 film *Snatch* and the UK-US TV series *My Big Fat Gypsy Wedding*, travelers are regarded with amusement, viewed as an odd and anachronistic lot prone to scrapping, bad manners, petty crime and a tragic fashion sense. On their own soil, perceptions are far less kind. The non-bleeding hearts, i.e., the majority of the Irish, fall into two camps. Some look at travelers as decent folks with a hearty supply of bad eggs, while others consider them a blight on society on par with, say, locusts or smallpox.

We head southwest on the N52 toward Tullamore, where a light afternoon workout awaits. During the 45-minute drive John Joe muses about his professional future. On Saint Patrick's Day in 2014, he made his victorious pro debut in Boston, and the significance wasn't lost on him. "I want to make a big impression in the US," he says. "Build a following in the Northeast, get the Irish crowds behind me. Make people remember my name." The boxer weighs the pros and cons of elite promoters such as Top Rank, Golden Boy

and DiBella Entertainment. He stresses the need for a sound career strategy en route to his first title, talks about the marketing savvy of middleweight "Irish" John Duddy, a popular regular at Madison Square Garden. "You're from New York, eh?" John Joe asks me. "Must have been something with that 9/11. They ever get them Eiffel Towers fixed?"

But if Nevin wants to one day fight for a title in the world's most famous arena, he'll have to overcome more than just dangerous opponents. He must first survive the traveler life, one defined by startling prejudice and discrimination, poverty, soaring mortality rates, high incidence of suicide, poor health, long-standing feuds with neighboring traveler clans and the often Shakespearean complications of one's own family. Exhibit A? As John Joe parks the car and marches across the Tullamore Aura Leisure Center lot, I notice he still has a slight limp. Last April, he made national Irish headlines with an altercation in Mullingar. Both his legs were broken. With a golf club. "I remember blood everywhere and trying to push the bone back under my skin," he says. "I was sure my career was over." The assailant? Not a mugger or a madman. It was his cousin, also named John Joe Nevin.



An hour north of Mullingar in the city of Cavan, just above a carpet and furniture warehouse, sits the Cavan Boxing Club. For more than a decade John Joe has made the commute here three, four, sometimes six days a week. Normally a trip to the gym is as routine as brushing his teeth. But today is different. It is a big day. An important day. For the first time since his legs have healed John Joe will step back into the ring.

The Cavan Boxing Club looks like most other boxing gyms. Walls covered in fight posters: Mayweather, Ali, Andy "the Quiet Man" Murray and John Joe Nevin. Dangling heavy bags, speed bags, double-end bags and a box full of used gloves, headgear and protective cups. Two rings covered in blue canvas. John Joe, sporting a yellow Brazilian Football Confederation team shirt, long green shorts and red 12-ounce gloves, slips through the ropes of one ring and begins loosening up. He is a small five-foot-eight, short-legged and long-armed, having won his silver medal at 56 kilograms (123 pounds). Paddy Boy – a two-time national amateur champion (under 16 and under 21) – dons a pair of mitts and joins his brother.

"Paddy's mad to get me back sparring," says John Joe with a grin. "He knows I'm rusty and he can catch me with a few shots."

The bell rings. John Joe moves cautiously on his rehabbed legs. His punches lack timing and purpose and the sound against the leather mitts is not a sharp crack but a muffled thud. Their father, Martin, with a shaved head and prominent paunch, leans on the top rope and watches without worry. He has seen his eldest son through more than 250 amateur fights. Although proud, he takes no credit. "Don't know where he got it," says the 46-year-old. "I never laced 'em up myself."

Standing a few feet outside the ropes, another man watches intently, his own hands encased in red-and-black pads etched with BELFAST BOXING. Brian McKeown runs the gym and has trained John Joe for 13 years. With a white beard, broad back and gray-blue eyes, the 67-year-old Northern Ireland native exudes the strength and vitality of a ship captain or a Mafia don. In a heavy brogue, he hints about his past – professional boxing aspirations, involvement in the Troubles, a bit of hard time. He's the sort of

SUFFERING DISCRIMINATION HURTS.

EVEN FOR SOMEONE WHO DOLES
OUT PUNISHMENT FOR A LIVING.

THEY'RE A HARDSCRABBLE LOT,
**84 PERCENT OF WHOM ARE
UNEMPLOYED AND**

ONLY 30 PERCENT OF WHOM WILL LIVE PAST
THE AGE OF 60.

man who, if he said he'd bitch-slapped Gerry Adams, I'd believe him.

His life now, however, revolves solely around boxing and his prized pupil. "I first met John Joe when he was 12 years old," says McKeown. "He had talent and was eager to fight, but he was unnaturally small. He was willing to give weight, height and age, but I was reluctant to do it because older boys were stronger, more mature and hit a lot harder. I was afraid John Joe might take a lot of shots and lose his appetite for it."

Yet John Joe had been feasting off bigger boys since his first bout at the age of eight. "The lad was 11 years old and had six kilos on me, but I was mad to get at him," recalls John Joe. Martin had bought his son long baggy shorts à la flamboyant former champion Prince Naseem Hamed. John Joe lost the bout but discovered his calling. "Each time he put me down, I got back up and did the Hamed shuffle," he says.

The Mullingar traveler won his first Irish National title at the age of 11. After repeating four of the following five years (his only speed bump at the under-15 nationals) he got a call from "the boys,"

a.k.a. the Dublin-based High Performance national team. Their offer? A 5,000-euro yearly stipend and a spot on the junior national squad. He didn't disappoint. By 2008 John Joe had won his first senior national title and qualified in Pescara, Italy for the Beijing Olympics.

An eventual second-round loss in China only fanned John Joe's fire for the 2012 Games. In London, however, there was reason for concern, namely, a brutal lineup of opponents. John Joe won his first two fights handily to set up a bout against Oscar Valdez, one of Mexico's top prospects. "I was pretty worried," admits John Joe. "He was a pressure fighter. Big hitter. Four Irish boxers had tried him in the past and lost." John Joe didn't (he won 19–13). After another decision over reigning bantamweight world champion Lázaro Álvarez of Cuba, John Joe found himself three rounds away from an Olympic gold medal.

Standing in his way was the UK's Luke Campbell. "I'd beaten your man before," says John Joe. "And not only beaten him. I made fun of him in the ring." But the Irishman admits he took his eye off the

ball and lost 14–11. Disappointed, yes. Deterred? Not a chance. The next summer he steamrolled the European Amateur Championships in Minsk, and that October he announced he was turning pro.

After one round of pads, McKeown lumbers into the ring and takes Paddy Boy's place. "Head up, son," he instructs, catching combinations with ease. "Drop the shoulder, roll the right hand and finish with the hook." The bell rings, ending round two. Sweat dripping down his nose, John Joe leans his heavy arms on the rope. McKeown isn't worried about endurance so much as weight transfer. "Can you put the weight on the leg? Is that a problem?"

I ask McKeown if there was ever a seminal, holy-shit moment when he knew John Joe was special. He mentions the time John Joe, as a 16-year-old, beat a man nine years his senior. He also mentions the qualifier in Italy where John Joe rallied in the last round to make the Olympics. But McKeown settles on the 2008 senior Irish lightweight title fight against Ulster vet Ryan Lindberg. "Lindberg was the defending champ and a top-class international fighter," says McKeown.

“John Joe beat him with double and triple scores. That made me sit back and say, ‘What the fuck have I got here?’”

But as McKeown will tell you, the surprise wasn’t so much John Joe’s talent but that the then 18-year-old was still fighting. Irish boxing gyms are brimming with young gypsy lads eager to box. For them, learning a right-cross, left-hook combination usually takes precedence over the multiplication tables. “For fuck’s sake, I’m surrounded by ‘em,” says the trainer, laughing. “I’d say 50 percent of the kids who come here are travelers. Good lads. Have a chip on their shoulder. And I expect ‘em to come, because fighting is such a part of traveler culture.” By the time they’re in their late teens, however, marriage, kids and social lives draw travelers away. Some have managed to stick with the sweet science, including light-middleweight Francie Barrett (17–3) and heavyweight Tyson Fury, currently ranked number three by *The Ring* magazine. “I followed a lot of my cousins into boxing,” says John Joe. “As we got older, they went to the streets – smoking, drinking, girls. I had my eye on something bigger.”

He adds, with no shortage of sarcasm, “They’re all living the dream now. It’s just not my dream.”



Mist falls on a raw evening as I approach the Mullingar Greyhound Stadium. As a sound rule of life, one should never pass up an evening at the dog track. I cough up my 10-euro admission fee and meet John Joe, Paddy Boy and Mullingar native “Big” John Lynch, an indefatigably cheerful tree surgeon who claims to have set the world’s record for the number of Christmas trees chopped down in less than two minutes. John Joe is on the phone. “Dad, I parked over in the lot of dat furniture store,” he says. The store’s neighborhood, and that of the track, is a bit unsavory. “Could ya drive by and check on it in a bit? Tanks.”

We head upstairs and discover a crowded bar and restaurant and a reasonably well-heeled local crowd that includes a bridal party. Five minutes to post in the second race and I lay a 20 on the caramel-colored long shot, number six. He comes in last. John Joe and Paddy Boy,

wagering conservatively, win 12 euros on the favorite. John Lynch buys a round of beers and we spend the next several hours speculating on the soundness of canines and the fitness of the bridal party. A fine Mullingar night out.

Slowly, however, I realize that everything isn’t so fine. Here is John Joe Nevin, Olympic star (no everyday occurrence – Ireland has only 28 medals in its Olympic history) and hometown hero. He should be fighting off the fans, yet no one approaches him. No one congratulates him. Nary a handshake or a photo request. It’s not that he’s unrecognized. I see the whispers, the nudges, the furtive glances. It’s just life for



SOME LOOK AT TRAVELERS AS DECENT FOLKS WITH A HEARTY SUPPLY OF BAD EGGS.

WHILE OTHERS CONSIDER THEM A
BLIGHT ON SOCIETY ON PAR WITH,
SAY, LOCUSTS OR SMALLPOX.

a traveler in a country where, according to a 2007–2008 study, 60 percent of the population wouldn’t want a traveler as a family member, 40 percent wouldn’t hire one and nearly 20 percent would deny travelers citizenship.

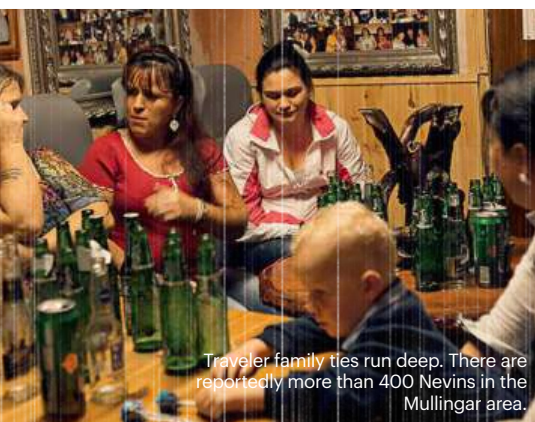
None of this is news. “Prejudice is a way of life for a traveler,” explains McKeown. “John Joe has realized it’s a handicap he must overcome. For him to attain what he did is amazing.” Fame doesn’t seem to matter. Nor does representing one’s country. Fifteen minutes before his semifinal Olympic bout against the Cuban Álvarez, John Joe’s phone rang. “Normally I wouldn’t answer,” he explains. “But I thought it was Father King, the priest in Dublin who calls before every fight to give me a blessing.” It was no invocation but his uncle Michael calling from Mullingar. A group of 30 travelers – John Joe’s extended

family – had shown up at a popular pub to watch the bout, only to be told that John Joe’s parents and Paddy Boy were welcome, but the rest were not. The basis? They were travelers. “They had to go to a pub six kilometers out of town,” says John Joe. He does little to

hide his disgust and anger. “These pubs in Mullingar had been using my name to promote business, then they don’t let in my family. It’s not fair.”

The incident made national news as another example of blatant discrimination. Not that it made a difference. Shortly after John Joe won the silver medal, the owner of a popular Dublin restaurant sent a tweet that the boxer’s relatives would soon be coming for the lead and copper. Upon John Joe’s return to Mullingar after the Olympics, thousands of people lined the streets for the celebration, yet not a single hotel would rent his family members a room. And there was the occasion in 2013 when the boxer returned from winning his European championship. When he sidled up to the bar in one of Mullingar’s tonier establishments, the barman stated bluntly, “We can’t serve you.” Then there was the





night in Dublin when they went for a bite at a pub and were refused, as McKeown will attest. “They said he had on trackie bottoms, so he couldn’t be served,” recalls the trainer. “Make no mistake. That’s just an excuse.”

Suffering discrimination hurts, even for someone who doles out punishment for a living. “Some people might deserve to be put out but not all of us,” says John Joe. “Not all should be painted with the one brush. All people should be treated the same.” Any traveler will tell you the problem is only getting worse in Ireland. Complaints to councilmen fall on deaf ears. “Ali winning a medal helped change things for the better for blacks in America,” claims the boxer. “Nothing’s changing for travelers here.”

The dog track outing ends. Despite dropping 75 euros on those mutts, we all have, as the saying goes in these parts, quite a crack. John Joe continues to be friendly, genuine and funny. Paddy Boy, once defrosted, is equally kind and reveals a dry wit. As we part ways for the night I’m starting to think that perhaps John Joe and his kinfolk might be exaggerating a bit, blowing things out of proportion.

I flag down a cab. The driver is a bespectacled avuncular-looking fellow in the neighborhood of 50 years old. “In from the States?” he inquires merrily.

“Yes, sir,” I reply. “Here doing a story on travelers.”

The cabbie’s smile disappears.

“Any experience with them?” I ask.

“They are hateful people,” he states coldly. “The only good traveler is a dead traveler. If I could have all the traveler boys castrated and all the girls’ tubes tied I would. They deal drugs, contribute nothing, and their fighting is ruining this country.”

“Even John Joe Nevin?”

“He’s called on me a few times. He’s a nice fellow. But the rest of them?”



Forty of “them” have convened at Martin Nevin’s house. Unwelcome in town, Martin wanted a place to have a proper pint, so he built his own pub in the backyard: two wood-paneled rooms complete with pool table, bar, several small tables, old-school jukebox and dartboard. The walls are covered with hundreds of photos of friends and family, a handful of boxing title belts and a sizable tribute to David Nevin, John Joe’s cousin and a talented amateur boxer who died of a heart attack in 2012 at the age of 25. This is the Irish equivalent of an American man-cave, the major difference being that here the TV is a 32-inch afterthought tucked into a corner. Travelers don’t huddle around the boob tube. They banter, play games and drink. And drink. And drink. It’s only five o’clock and already I tally 300 empty Carlsbergs.

This crowd, predominately male, under 40 and related by blood and/or marriage, doesn’t drink lattes. They do not go to spin class. They’re a hardscrabble lot, 84 percent of whom are unemployed and only 30 percent of whom will live past the age of 60, according to national statistics. The men are all named John Joe, Paddy, Huey,

David, Michael or Christy. They all sport crew cuts, goatees and large tattoos bearing either the family name or that of a wife, a son or fallen kin. Travelers are, above all, about family. Nevins pride themselves on the scope and closeness of their clan. Martin, one of 18 siblings, boasts there are 400 Nevins living in the Mullingar area and upward of 1,500 worldwide. “Family is the most important thing in life,” explains John Joe as he sips a beer. “I don’t go a day without seeing everyone.”

While the love of family abounds, the love of a reporter asking questions and scribbling notes does not. Outsiders are anomalies in traveler communities, and for the most part I am received as warmly as an IRS auditor. I don’t fear for my life, but if some of the revelers have a few too many, I don’t rule out bodily harm.

I stick close to John Joe. Despite his fame and experience in the outside world, he is treated, at least within these walls, no differently from anyone else. With good reason. Aside from boxing, he has led a typical traveler life. He dropped out of school at 14. He married as a teenager and has a four-year-old son named, unsurprisingly, Martin. He lives in an estate house in west Mullingar among other travelers. When I ask if he has ever considered moving (the prejudice, the golf club attack, etc) he looks at me as though I’ve suggested he become Protestant. “Move? Never,” he says. “This is my home.”

I venture for a bathroom break, the toilet being enclosed in a small shed in the driveway. On my way back I’m corralled by Martin, who introduces me to cousin Ollie, an olive-skinned man built like a bank vault. I have heard of Ollie. In an off-the-record conversation, a veteran Mullingar Garda described Ollie as the most dangerous Nevin and possibly the most feared man in Mullingar. When I mention this, Ollie is pleased. He freely offers an example of his gift. “Last fight I had was against Hughie Fury, cousin of Tyson. About six-foot-six and 20 stone,” says Ollie of his 280-pound foe. “And God as my witness he didn’t do nothing to me. I gave him a punch and broke all his inside teeth.” I inquire about his nose, which looks rather off-kilter. “I broke my nose once but not with a man’s fist,” he says. “Was with a pool ball.”

The two men then turn to a more serious matter, one involving John Joe. (At this point I must address the issue of elocution. Traveler conversations are, by and large, difficult to follow: See Pitt, Brad as Mickey



John Joe Nevin with his trainer, Brian McKeown, at the Cavan Boxing Club.

OLYMPIA HOME

O'Neil in *Snatch*. And when they get their load on, they sound like drunken Swedes mumbling in their sleep. I can piece together this "serious matter" only after listening to the recording a dozen times.) A cousin of theirs, a boxer, had slipped into John Joe's weight class, and the two fought. John Joe could easily have stopped the lad but didn't. Brought him "nice and handy" through the rounds. Yet for some reason the boy's uncle was mad — he wanted the boy to win. The following Thursday all the parties involved were going to be at the same wedding, and Martin expressed concern.

"Won't be a problem," mumbles Ollie.

"Don't want a problem," mumbles Martin.

"I'll make damn sure of it. Have it cleared. I'll personally see it."

This conflict, to an outsider like myself, sounds absurd, pointless, much ado about nothing. But within the traveler

community there is a minority, a very loud, vocal, persistent group that gives the Palestinians and Israelis a run for their money when it comes to fueling conflict. There are feuds between various traveler families. There are quarrels within traveler families. There are incidents between travelers and settled people. The reasons are often a mystery. The by-products are not. And the very public and headline-catching incidents haven't been the best PR for travelers.

Google "Irish traveler fighting." In addition to thousands of hours of video of bare-knuckle fights and traveler lads calling out other traveler lads, you'll find a variety of colorful links such as "Travelers fight in a church with slash hooks at a funeral" and "Irish travelers fighting in shopping center" and "Armed Gardaí at scene as fight between rival travelers reignites this morning." The repeat offenders are often familiar traveler

families: Nevin, Myers, Dinnegan, Joyce and Quinn McDonagh. John Joe knows very well of his extended family's involvement. In 2009 a judge called Patrick Nevin "the villain of the peace" gave the then 20-year-old a two-year sentence for a broad-daylight beating. Christy "Ditsy" Nevin was the alleged ringleader in a 2007 attack on a family home and the infamous 2008 riot that involved 200 people in the Mullingar Dalton Park housing estate. (According to reports, the feud began over unpaid bets on a bare-knuckle fight.)

I believe John Joe when he says he's never seen a bare-knuckle fight in person and hasn't taken part in any skullduggery or violence. Still, he knows firsthand how one can become a casualty of tribal jealousy and family squabbles. Enough time has passed that the young fighter doesn't get emotional when talking about the brown, uneven inch-and-a-half-long

Boys sparring outside the Nevins' pub in Mullingar.



HERE IS JOHN JOE NEVIN, THE STAR AND DOWN HEAD.

HE SHOULD BE FIGHTING OFF THE
FANS, YET NO ONE APPROACHES
HIM. NO ONE CONGRATULATES
HIM

scar on his right leg where the bone sheared straight through the skin.

That Saturday morning John Joe and Paddy Boy had driven to the nearby Ardleigh Crescent housing estate to try to settle an ongoing dispute between their cousin John Joe Nevin and his father (their uncle), Michael. A fracas broke out. John Joe the cousin claims he feared for the safety of his wife and infant. John Joe the boxer asserts the savage golf club assault was unprovoked and based purely on jealousy. Whatever the case, the fighter obviously got the worst of it. Paddy Boy

grabbed a toy hurley stick from the car and came to his brother's aid. The whole event lasted maybe three minutes but left a bloodied and broken boxer en route to the hospital with his career hanging in the balance.

"At first I went into a deep depression," admits John Joe. These days he feels the experience made him stronger as a fighter. "I cherish boxing now."

As for his cousin? "He'll have to meet his maker one day. Get his judgment then," says John Joe. After nine months, the two made peace over a pint and dropped the case. "It was just the right

thing to do."



Fore! Welcome to the Mullingar Golf Club, a 6,685-yard, par 72 course created by famous Scottish designer James Braid. Stroll around the clubhouse and you'll find a plethora of stuffy old-school country club types straight out of *Caddyshack*. A perfect place for a couple of travelers, right? Well, the lads are here – John Joe, Paddy Boy, cousin David and other cousin Joe – participating in the Irish Autism Action charity outing.

I catch up with their foursome on the fourth tee (they started at the third hole), adjacent to the clubhouse. While other golfers are decked out in spikes, khakis and argyle patterns, the lads prefer more personal fashion statements. John Joe wears a black polo, jeans and sneakers. Paddy Boy and David are in sneakers and sweatshirts. In black dress slacks, black shoes and a translucent white button-down, Joe looks like a waiter, his massive NEVIN tattoo clearly visible across his back.

Paddy Boy is the first to tee off. In all my years I've never before witnessed a golf stance like his. Hands a foot apart on the club, he crouches low, as if hovering over a toilet seat. He swings, and the ball – not a shocker – trickles a few feet. "Fuck's sake!" he cries. John Joe is next. As he tees up, a handful of young boys by the clubhouse recognize him and excitedly begin to take photos and shoot video. The boxer takes a massive hack and the ball bounces a paltry 30 yards. "Don't put that video on YouTube, lads," says John Joe with a chuckle.

The four are a golf course's worst nightmare. They leave a trail of unreplaced divots and unraked sand traps. They walk across active fairways and hit into a foursome ahead of them. The damp, blustery conditions and aggressive black flies don't help their play. Frustrations arise.

"You can't use tees on your second shot. That's disqualification."

"What'd you score? I lost count."

"The two lads are cheating the most."

"I just want to win one hole."

"Boxing is way easier than golf."

After five holes, the lads call it quits and head for the clubhouse. With all the golfers still on the course, the dining room is empty and the four of them pull up chairs by the bar. The place is posh, formal, and the stern faces of former club chairmen stare down at us from the walls. I wonder what they'd think of travelers in their midst. The bartender happily serves John Joe and his kin their pints. Brings them their food without an iota of indignation.

I ask John Joe about his future, whether he thinks a title can help bridge the gap between the travelers and the settled people in Mullingar. "I don't know if it would," he replies. "But if I become world champion I'll just buy my own bar in town. Show everyone up. And I'll let everyone and anyone in." ♫



FROM
AUSTRALIA

WITH LOVE

ASHLEIGH
HANNAH

MISS OCTOBER



PHOTOGRAPHY BY CASSANDRA KEYES
HAIR & MAKEUP BY MICHELLE CARDENAS

From the moment we saw stunner Ashleigh Hannah, we knew she was destined for big things as she has not only beauty but brains as well. Ashleigh is a law student from Australia in her final year of studies, and will soon be defending justice and looking good doing it (that is, if the glamorous world of international modeling doesn't seduce her first).

For Ashleigh's shoot, we gave photographer Cassandra Keyes carte blanche and she decided they needed a concept that captured not only Ashleigh's gorgeous body but also the strength of her character. And nothing says that more than the look of a multinational woman of mystery. They chose Catalina Island, arriving in style via helicopter, and then exploring the coastline on a working trawler before heading back into the ritzy harbor of Santa Catalina where they shot on a luxury boat under the walls of the art deco casino. It might have ended there, but they were having so much fun they headed up the cliffs high above the old town of Avalon for the final shots of Ashleigh as the sun set into the infinite Pacific Ocean. The world is certainly not enough for the charming Miss October.







ASHLEIGH IS DESTINED FOR GREAT
THINGS... SHE NOT ONLY HAS
BEAUTY BUT
BRAINS AS WELL





MISS OCTOBER





ASHLEIGH
HANNAH

PLAYMATE DATA SHEET

NAME: Ceshleigh Hannah

BUST: 34DD

WAIST: 24

HIPS: 34

HEIGHT: 173cm

WEIGHT: 53kg

BIRTH DATE: 28 July 1992

BIRTHPLACE: New South Wales, Australia

WHAT ARE YOUR PROFESSIONAL AMBITIONS:

I'm in my final year at law school and hope to one day practice in humanitarian law. In the mean time, I'm really loving the opportunities and experiences that have become available to me through modeling and I'm definitely going to pursue modeling as far as I can take it.

TURN-ONS:

The biggest turn-on for me is someone who is a great conversationalist. A good vocabulary and a great smile go a long way too.

TURN-OFFS:

Ignorance.

DESCRIBE YOUR DREAM DATE:

My dream date would be doing something adventurous and unique. I'm all about new and exciting experiences, so anyone who is going to provide that is likely to get a second date.

THREE THINGS I CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT:

great books, great food and great music.

MY GUILTY PLEASURE:

Good quality ice cream!

I'M NOT EMBARRASSED TO SAY:

I'm a big sci-fi geek.

SEXY IS:

Being comfortable and proud of your body. Caring for and nurturing your body. Being open to learning and listening.



FAVORITE QUOTE

"I don't mind living in a man's world as long as I can be a woman in it."
- Marilyn Monroe



SHE'LL SOON BE DEFENDING JUSTICE
**AND LOOKING GOOD
DOING IT**
IF THE GLAMOUROUS WORLD OF
INTERNATIONAL MODELING DOESN'T
SEDUCE HER FIRST







BON VOYAGE
...•••



“I’m not at all sure this is just a fossil.”



/// BY DAVID RENSIN ///

20Q

LizzyCAPLAN

THE FEARLESS AND FUNNY STAR OF
MASTERS OF SEX IS FAR FROM SHY

/// PHOTOGRAPHY BY KURT ISWARIENKO ///

Q1

PLAYBOY: On Showtime's *Masters of Sex* – about the lives and work of sex researchers

Dr William Masters and Virginia Johnson – you play Virginia. How tough is it to play someone real?

CAPLAN: I didn't feel tremendous stress impersonating her because she's not somebody enough people know so well that they could judge if I was moving or speaking like she did. I was let off the hook. It turned out I identified with her to an eerie degree – her struggle, what it was like for a woman then. And yet, because I was mainly known for doing comedy, not drama, I just couldn't shake the idea that the people who had hired me would quickly get wise to the fact that I was the wrong person for the job, that I was in over my head. Luckily, that's what the real Virginia Johnson felt when she showed up for her first day with Dr Masters, so it worked for me.

Q2

PLAYBOY: There's a lot of nudity on *Masters of Sex*, including yours. How comfortable are you with being naked on-camera?

CAPLAN: It's certainly not boring. They give us pretty intense stuff to do. A standard-issue sex scene is one thing, but standing completely naked and masturbating in front of someone is quite another. *Arrgh*. All that stuff we did in the second season is just now coming back to me. I've watched only the first season and three episodes from the second, in part because season two started airing while we were still shooting. I realized that, as an actress, especially in this role – in fact, *only* for this role so far in my career – it required a much different muscle to make the show than to watch it. Drama is such a departure for me. I wanted to trust my instincts and not let viewing – and the inevitable self-criticism – affect my performance. I don't know many actors who enjoy watching their work anyway. At premieres they'll go to dinner during the movie and then show up to the party.



Q3

PLAYBOY: You're not the only one who takes off their kit on the show. In addition to your test subjects, Michael Sheen, who plays Masters, strips down for sex scenes with you – for research purposes only, of course.

CAPLAN: I don't think Michael Sheen does this, but definitely most of the guys who take their shirts off do push-ups or lift weights. The super-cut guys have these intense regimens. Not only do they work out all day, but they also don't drink any water and they swallow diuretics for one day. That doesn't sound great. I guess it's just as bad for the boys; they're as vain as we are.

Q4

PLAYBOY: *Masters of Sex* takes place during the late 1950s and early 1960s, an era when women ramped up their struggle

for liberation. Virginia Johnson keeps pushing the envelope, but you can feel her frustration at almost every turn. Things have changed, but have they changed enough?

CAPLAN: The tough pills that women are expected to swallow have gotten better, but it's naive to think we've come that far from the 1950s. Women are still expected to accept a lower paycheck than a man for the same amount of work. And what about the difficulties every working mother faces, the stigma of leaving her child with a caregiver versus staying home and giving up her own dreams? There's nothing on our show around the feminist issues that I don't feel has a huge echo today. If anything, it makes me angry about today. *[pauses]* I've never said this out loud before, but I don't know if we'll get there in my lifetime. Until we can convince our own side – women – that this is a good thing for all of us, I don't see how we stand a chance convincing all the men.



WHEN YOU
DISCOVER A
MAN WHO
WEARS
TIGHTY-
WHITIES, HOLD
ON TO HIM.





“GIVEN
THE RIGHT
CONDITIONS,
MOST
PEOPLE WILL
PAY FOR A
PIZZA
THEY DID
NOT ORDER.”

Q5

PLAYBOY: Women are divided about equality too?

CAPLAN: Yes. It's disturbing. It's not a 50-50 split, but some women have reacted to what I think is the wrong definition of feminism. It doesn't mean you hate men or you hate sex or you're a butch lesbian. Feminism is about equality. And yet some women with sway in this world, especially with younger girls, are unwilling to identify as feminists, and I don't see how that helps. There are still some women fighting against other women who want to make their own reproductive decisions. That just blows my mind.

Q6

PLAYBOY: You did your first nude scene during a short arc on *True Blood*. Did you really prepare by getting smashed on

vodka? What brand is best for helping loosen your inhibitions?

CAPLAN: Wow, that feels like so long ago. I was just 25 and really nervous. The first time is scariest. I think I drank Grey Goose, kept in the freezer from the night before and mixed into a bottle of Vitaminwater – a surprisingly delicious cocktail. I drank the entire bottle and had to get my stomach pumped. *[laughs]* I don't know who told me the facts of life about doing nude scenes, but it was “Do whatever you need to do to get through it.” I was encouraged to get loose. Unfortunately that's not an option on *Masters*, even for the more intimidating nude scenes, because they're always in the middle of the day, with nine pages of intense dialogue. For the *True Blood* scene I had to walk across a room wearing only tiny panties and climb on a guy, and that was it.

Q7

PLAYBOY: Can you tell when someone you meet socially has seen you on-screen in the buff? What are the signs of creep factor?

CAPLAN: It's usually a guy who can't stop smiling and whose eye contact is inappropriately intense when he introduces himself. They're incapable of hiding it. Very uncomfortable and stressful. But what am I going to do, be mad that people watch my show?

Q8

PLAYBOY: When actresses talk about disrobing on set one always hears the same thing: how wonderful the crew is, how sensitive. It's almost a cliché. What's it really like?

CAPLAN: The crews *are* very respectful. It's a pared-down crew, the smallest group

possible – the director of photography, producers, writers, makeup artist. And I really trust them. I've looked up from a scene, and no matter what, as soon as they cut, everybody turns the cameras away and looks down at the ground. Nobody's trying to sneak a peek. They also lock the set up tightly. For the particularly intimidating sex scenes, I double-check who will be behind the monitor. It's one thing to feel safe in the room, but with monitors broadcasting, you have to feel safe all over the set. It's a good thing there's no live feed in the cafeteria. That would be bad.

MY JOB IS TO
CONVINCE
YOU THAT I'M
SOMEBODY ELSE.
THE LESS PEOPLE
KNOW ABOUT
ME, THE BETTER.
ALLOWED TO BE
AT MY JOB.

Q9

PLAYBOY: You've described yourself as an actress who has appeared in many roles, most of which you claim nobody has seen. But with a résumé that includes shows such as *Party Down*, *The League*, *The Class*, *Related* and *The Pitts*, as well as guest spots on *New Girl*, *Smallville* and your debut on *Freaks and Geeks*, plus roles in films including *The Interview*, *Hot Tub Time Machine*, *Cloverfield*, *Bachelorette* and *Mean Girls* – and this is just half of what you've done – you'll excuse us for not believing you. What's your stick-to-it secret?

CAPLAN: I'm very competitive and ambitious. I've gotten angry when I didn't get a role. That fueled me for many years. Instead of quitting, I just wanted to make a list of whoever I thought had wronged me by not hiring me. I'd show those motherfuckers. I'm sure I've since gone to work for some of those motherfuckers, because at a certain point you have to let it

go. If it were easy to be an actor or actress, then everybody would do it. We all have to start at the bottom. I'm grateful for every bad audition experience. It's given me a career I can be truly grateful for. We shouldn't be handed things.

Q10

PLAYBOY: Is it true you avoid social media?

CAPLAN: I've never been on Twitter, Facebook, Myspace or Instagram. I know myself well enough to know that I would spend far too much time obsessing over a tweet or a photo or an opinion. I understand I'm part of a business, that it's not driven just by artistic integrity.

You have to take into account the commerce. But being online is not my job. My job is to convince you that I'm somebody else. The less people know about me, the better I'm allowed to be at my job. I don't want to get a job because I have 500,000 Twitter followers. I want to get a job because I earned it.

Q11

PLAYBOY: What's the first thing you do in the morning and the last thing you do at night?

CAPLAN: Besides open and close my eyes? I know what I *should* do: take a few deep breaths, a couple of moments of meditative thoughts, stretch, start my day. What I actually do is hit snooze about 15 times, check my email, get pissed off by something I read, get out of bed, drink two cups of coffee before I've eaten anything and start my day on the totally wrong foot. The end of my day should also involve some deep breathing, some light meditation and perhaps some more stretching. But it usually just ends with watching *The Real Housewives*. I love it. It's painful but so meaningless to my life that it's like junk food. It's white noise, and for some reason it relaxes me.

Q12

PLAYBOY: You once told Conan O'Brien about rifling through your parents' *X-Rated Cookbook* as a child and seeing a breast tart and a meat-loaf penis. What else did you discover that you couldn't describe on the air?

CAPLAN: It's been 25 years, but those

are seared into my memory. The breast tart was beautifully photographed in that kind of grainy 1970s color. The dick meat loaf was just disgusting and unsettling. I don't remember anything resembling a butt or vagina, but the vagina could have been anything. Does a shellfish work for you? A hamantasch?

It was probably some sort of cake or meat shaped into a sloppy-looking vagina that could feed a family of four.

Q13

PLAYBOY: You've said you grew up a tomboy. When did you get into girly clothes?

CAPLAN: The show helped. Every single day I wear these long-line bras and girdles and stockings that I put into garter clips – just like your mom used to wear. That makes me feel like a woman before I even go into hair and makeup. I wore panty hose and tights when I was younger, but not stockings, which are very elegant. I like jeans and T-shirts, so I don't know if I would have matured into my womanhood, as queer as that sounds, without this job. Or maybe I'm just at the age when this starts to happen to all of us career tomboys. I'll credit the show.

Q14

PLAYBOY: When you were a kid, what was under the bed that scared you?

CAPLAN: Seriously, every night I checked in my sheets for spiders and in my closet for monsters and/or robbers. I was always petrified someone was going to break into the house and kill me. Always. I think girls are raised to be more aware of who's walking behind them on the street. You have to be more alert moving through your life than a guy does, which pisses me off. At the time, I thought it would be a genius idea to keep a bottle of ketchup by my bed. In case somebody broke in I could pour ketchup on myself so it would look like I was already dead – and they'd leave me alone. It now seems sort of crazy that anyone who would break in would believe that someone else had gotten there first. Another problem: It takes too long to get the ketchup out of the bottle. I needed a squirt bottle. Terrible plan. Major holes.



“WHAT’S BETTER THAN SEX? SEX WITH SOMEONE I LIKE.”

Q15

PLAYBOY: What would we find in your underthings drawer that would surprise us?

CAPLAN: A severed human head. And a severed finger – but I won’t specify which one. *[laughs]* I’ve always found it hilarious how guys are shocked when they see what’s in girls’ underwear drawers: It’s the underwear we wear when you’re not going to see us. I do have some going-out underwear, but I’m really not into dropping a lot of coins on sexy lingerie. I love lingerie, but it’s more for me and for showing other girls. Guys, I’ve realized, can find *anything* sexy.

Q16

PLAYBOY: What do you find sexy?

CAPLAN: I like when guys *don’t* wear those boxer briefs that go to mid-thigh and look like bike shorts. It’s harder and harder to find. They’re very popular, but I think they look stupid. I prefer old-fashioned tighy-whities or even just boxer shorts. When you discover a man who wears tighy-whities, you hold on to him. It’s so old-school. They’re great.

Q17

PLAYBOY: What don’t women understand about men that they still need to learn? And vice versa.

CAPLAN: For the ladies, I suppose it’s worth assuming that whatever little physical imperfections you obsess over in the mirror are in reality invisible to the man you’re standing naked in front of. He is distracted, you see, by your breasts. For the men: that your girlfriend’s girlfriends know everything about your penis and most things about your balls.

Q18

PLAYBOY: What kind of man has a chance with you?

CAPLAN: A guy who wants a chance with me has to have a sick and dark sense of humor. *[laughs]* I’ve had a handful of serious relationships. I take that shit very seriously. Before breaking up I will try everything to make it work, because if I love somebody, it means a great deal. I don’t toss that word around easily or frequently. But when it’s over, there’s a DO NOT RESUSCITATE

sign hung around the relationship’s head. Sometimes it just doesn’t work out.

Q19

PLAYBOY: We’ve heard you’re a food thief who likes to eat off other people’s plates. You even have a special three-foot-long fork.

CAPLAN: I did have the fork, but I’m careful to eat only from portions that seem untouched. I get that it might be weird for others, but I was raised not to create boundaries around my plate or around the plates of others. Besides, food just looks better when it’s on someone else’s plate.

Q20

PLAYBOY: We forgot to ask: When did you master sex? And what’s better than sex?

CAPLAN: Immediately. *[laughs]* Nah, no one does it immediately. I was very lucky to have an ideal first sexual experience. It was good and sweet and safe. What’s better than sex? Sex with someone I like.

LOCAL IS LEKKER

SA FILM RELEASES

IMPUNITY

AUGUST 28

With the themes of corruption and brutality at its center, this film is a profound investigation into contemporary South Africa. In a country where people who commit crime are often seen to be exempt from punishment, or free from the consequences of their actions, filmmaker Jyoti Mistry's new film *Impunity* invites its audience to reflect on the nature of violence.

In a similar vein to *Natural Born Killers*, *Impunity* is a fictional story centered on a young, attractive couple, Derren (Bjorn Steinbach) and Echo (Alex McGregor), who commit acts of crime and violence, leaving a trail of murders in their wake. A Special Crimes Unit investigator Dingande Fakude (Desmond Dube) and a local police detective and trained psychologist Naveed Khan (Vaneshran Arumugam), take them in for questioning after a high-profile murder. The film is interspersed with cuts to security-cam and news footage of violence, both criminal and accidental, as well as newspaper headlines highlighting some of the estimated 650,000 violent crimes that take place each year. The Toronto Film Festival organizers described *Impunity* as "an eye-opening jolt, casting an unwavering gaze on South Africa's increasingly troubling surrender to the banality of violence."



AYANDA

AUGUST 28

Love, friendship and growth in contemporary South Africa are the themes of a new film by award-winning director Sara Blecher. *Ayanda* tells the story of a single-minded 21-year-old Afro-hipster Ayanda (Fulu Mugovhani), who has a talent for taking neglected pieces of furniture and "bringing them back to love." Eight years after her father's death, his prized auto repair garage is in deep debt and in danger of being sold, but Ayanda does everything in her power to hold onto his legacy.

"The film is set in a vibrant and diverse Johannesburg and gives audiences a colorful and vivid view of South Africa right now," says director Blecher. "With a youthful cast, it has energy and street style. At its heart, however, the film looks at what it's like for a young girl to grow up without a father, and how she and others around her have to learn how to let go of the things and people they love to move forward." The film also stars Nigerian actor OC Ukeje, Jafta Mamabolo, Nthathi Moshesh, Kenneth Nkosi, Sihle Xaba and Vanessa Cooke.



TELL ME SWEET SOMETHING

SEPTEMBER 4

She's a writer with lover's block and he's Joburg's top celebrity model. Can brains and beauty make a match? *Tell Me Sweet Something* stars Nomzamo Mbatha and Maps Maponyane as unlikely lovers Moratiwa and Nat. Filmed on location in Gauteng, what started in a rehearsal space in Norwood in November 2010 has blossomed into the most anticipated film of the year.

The story finds Moratiwa, who hasn't had much luck with love ever since her ex-boyfriend Norman went out to buy milk and never came back, running a second-hand bookshop in the hippest most vibrant part of the new Johannesburg. But, unfortunately in the glamorous world of IT girls and boys, books are not "a thing." Tired of having a recluse as a best friend, Tashaka (Thishiwe Ziqubu) convinces Moratiwa to party up a storm at a new club in the city; it is here that she meets Nat. They exchange small talk and Moratiwa isn't impressed that Nat doesn't read books. As she tells Tashaka: "He's a model, what would we talk about?" Tashaka replies: "Who says you have to talk? Watch as two different worlds collide in this charming, funny, romantic and very sweet film showing a side of Johannesburg that is rarely seen: The City of Gold as a City Of Love."



IN THEATERS SOON

INTERNATIONAL FILM RELEASES

SOUTHPAW

SEPTEMBER 4

From acclaimed director Antoine Fuqua (*Training Day*) and screenwriter Kurt Sutter (*Sons of Anarchy*), *Southpaw* tells the riveting story of Billy "The Great" Hope, reigning Light Heavyweight Boxing Champion of the World (Jake Gyllenhaal). Hope seemingly has it all with an impressive career, a beautiful and loving wife (Rachel McAdams), an adorable daughter (Oona Laurence) and a lavish lifestyle. When tragedy strikes and his lifelong manager and friend (Curtis "50 Cent" Jackson) leaves him behind, Hope hits rock bottom and turns to an unlikely savior at a run-down local gym: Tick Willis (Forest Whitaker), a retired fighter and trainer to the city's toughest amateur boxers. With his future riding on Tick's guidance and tenacity, Hope enters the hardest battle of his life as he struggles with redemption and to win back the trust of those he loves.



THE VISIT

SEPTEMBER 11

Writer/director/producer M Night Shyamalan (*The Sixth Sense*, *Signs*, *Unbreakable*) and producer Jason Blum (*Paranormal Activity*, *The Purge* and *Insidious* series) welcome you to Universal Pictures' *The Visit*. Shyamalan returns to his roots with the terrifying story of a brother and sister who are sent to their grandparents' remote Pennsylvania farm for a weeklong trip. Once the children discover that the elderly couple is involved in something deeply disturbing, they see their chances of getting back home are growing smaller every day. The film stars Kathryn Hahn, Ed Oxenbould, Benjamin Kanen, and Shelby Lackman.



EVEREST

SEPTEMBER 18

Inspired by the incredible events surrounding a treacherous 1996 attempt to reach the summit of the world's highest mountain, *Everest* documents the awe-inspiring journey of two different expeditions challenged beyond their limits by one of the fiercest snowstorms ever encountered by mankind. Their mettle tested by the harshest of elements found on the planet, the climbers face nearly impossible obstacles as a lifelong obsession becomes a breathtaking struggle for survival. The film stars Martin Henderson, Jake Gyllenhaal, Josh Brolin, Keira Knightley, Emily Watson, Michael Kelly, John Hawkes, Sam Worthington, Jason Clarke, Robin Wright and Thomas M Wright.



IN THEATERS SOON (CONTINUED)

INTERNATIONAL FILM RELEASES

PAWN SACRIFICE

OCTOBER 9

American chess phenomenon Bobby Fischer (Tobey Maguire) squares off against his Russian rival Boris Spassky (Liev Schreiber) in the 1972 *Match of the Century* in Reykjavik, in this gripping drama from director Edward Zwick (*Glory*) and screenwriter Steven Knight (*Eastern Promises*).



STRAIGHT OUTTA COMPTON

OCTOBER 23

In 1987, five young men, using brutally honest rhymes and hardcore beats, put their frustration and anger about life in the most dangerous place in America into the most powerful weapon they had: their music. Taking us back to where it all began, *Straight Outta Compton* tells the true story of how these cultural rebels - armed only with their lyrics, swagger, bravado and raw talent - stood up to the authorities that meant to keep them down and formed the world's most dangerous group, N.W.A. And as they spoke the truth that no one had before and exposed life in the hood, their voice ignited a social revolution that is still reverberating today. *Straight Outta Compton* stars O'Shea Jackson Jr., Corey Hawkins and Jason Mitchell as Ice Cube, Dr Dre and Eazy-E, and is directed by F Gary Gray.



MAZE RUNNER: SCORCH TRIALS

SEPTEMBER 25

In this next chapter of the epic *Maze Runner* saga, Thomas (Dylan O'Brien) and his fellow Gladers face their greatest challenge yet: searching for clues about the mysterious and powerful organization known as WCKD. Their journey takes them to the Scorch, a desolate landscape filled with unimaginable obstacles. Teaming up with resistance fighters, the Gladers take on WCKD's vastly superior forces and uncover its shocking plans for them all.





RANDALL PARK

BY SHANE MICHAEL SINGH

A WET HOT TALK WITH THE MAN WHO TAUNTED NORTH KOREA

• After tackling every job from slinging Frappuccinos to peddling K-Y Jelly on TV, last year Randall Park found himself in the middle of a political crisis that nearly shut down Hollywood. As the guy who plays Kim Jong-un in *The Interview*, the Korean American actor took the spotlight to defend the controversial film just ahead of the debut of his ABC sitcom, *Fresh Off the Boat*. Now, with two new comedies, including Netflix's *Wet Hot American Summer* series, he's ready for a breezier leg of his career, free of meddling, militant supreme leaders. "And if I can avoid doing another K-Y Jelly commercial, I'll be happy," Park says. "I don't want to explain that to my parents again."

PLAYBOY: Next year the US elects a new president. What has playing douchey Minnesota governor Danny Chung on *Veep* taught you about politics?

PARK: It has sharpened my ability to read between the lines and find subtext. But with that, politics now bum me out. It's too bad people care so much about whether Hillary Clinton tipped at Chipotle, but they eat it up.

PLAYBOY: Your Kim Jong-un was surprisingly lovable. What other baddie would you like to tackle?

PARK: It'd be cool to see an Asian Dracula. We've had Blacula but no Asian one. It's time.

Q+A

PLAYBOY: You're a newbie in *WHAS*'s huge cast of returning players, including Paul Rudd and Amy Poehler. Which absurd story line do you intersect?

PARK: I interact with Molly Shannon, which says a lot about my character. The series takes place over the course of one day, like the movie did; this time it's the first day of camp. It's completely ridiculous. It's so dumb.

PLAYBOY: Did you have to wear moose-knuckle shorts?

PARK: I did not have to wear the short-shorts, thankfully. If I did, though, they would have been übershort.

PLAYBOY: You're also in Amy Schumer's major film debut, *Trainwreck*.

PARK: Women are putting out the most exciting stuff in comedy right now, and Amy is a genius. In *Trainwreck*, our boss is played by Tilda Swinton, and let me tell you, she's almost unrecognizable in this movie as a "real person." To see her that way was cool but jarring.



PHOTOGRAPHY BY CHRIS MCPHERSON

END GAMES

WHAT IF NOBODY EVER WANTS TO HOST THE OLYMPICS AGAIN?

Next fall, the International Olympic Committee will decide the location of the 2024 Summer Games, and if Chris Dempsey has his way, Boston will finish well off the podium. “It just doesn’t make sense,” says Dempsey, the leader of No Boston Olympics, the city’s top opposition group. His sentiments aren’t uncommon: A poll by Boston’s NPR station this April found that only 40 percent of Bostonians want the Games in their city.

Cities have been shying away from hosting the Olympics since 1997, and Smith College economics professor

Andrew Zimbalist says it’s all about the benjamins. The IOC requires guarantees that public funds will cover costs not met through private enterprise. As a result, says Zimbalist, “there are few economic benefits to hosting.” The lowest possible price is \$10 billion; Beijing and Sochi cost more than \$40 billion each. Boston’s entire annual budget? Just \$2.7 billion.

Rio de Janeiro, the host for next summer’s games, has budgeted for \$13.2 billion – but costs are expected to reach much higher. Building a velodrome and a luxurious athlete’s village will now take precedence over critical public infrastructure improvements. The only cities still

vying for the 2022 Winter Games, unsurprisingly, are Beijing and Almaty, Kazakhstan.

In response, IOC president Thomas Bond has proposed 40 reforms, such as an increased focus on existing and temporary structures and a \$1.5 billion pledge for host cities. These reforms have drawn cities including Paris, Rome, Hamburg and Doha back into the running for 2024, but most of the policy changes don’t decrease spending. That’s because few of the IOC’s 205 member nations have a vested interest in lowering costs. “A lot of those countries aren’t hosting, but they get a share of the profits,” says Allen Sanderson, a senior economics lecturer at the University of Chicago.

Still, we all – government leaders included – sometimes act in economically irrational ways. “We lose money on a lot of things in life – having dogs, boats, raising teenage daughters – that we’re happy to do,” Sanderson points out. The Olympics bring prestige (don’t discount every mayor’s love of a good ribbon cutting) even at the cost of potential economic ruin. That’s why recent Games were awarded to regimes such as China and Russia, Zimbalist says, where citizens don’t have a say.

The key will be 2024. If the committee picks a cheaper bid, it could signify a shift. If not, only cities desperate for positive press will shell out to host future Olympics.

Either way, count Boston out. “We have a thoughtful, educated populace that thinks hard and asks questions,” Dempsey says. “They’ve read and seen other cities’ history enough to say, ‘You know, maybe this isn’t what we need.’” – Noah Davis.



ILLUSTRATION BY PATRICK GEORGE

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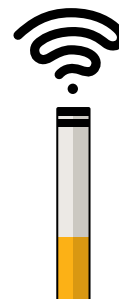
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→ Time to rethink lighting up a joint next time you're in a hotel room or Airbnb rental. A new sensor developed by a Dartmouth College chemistry professor can detect both cigarette and marijuana smoke that previous smoke detectors would have missed. Marketed as the AirGuard by FreshAir Sensors, the device connects to a power outlet and uses a special polymer film to sniff out the presence of tobacco and marijuana vapor. Once alerted, the system uses a wi-fi connection to send a notice to the property owner or manager. FreshAir sees hotels as its initial customers but has had interest from condo boards, public housing developments, dormitories, jails and even nursing homes. The company also plans to release a handheld version that your mother – and your boss – will probably love.

ILLUSTRATION BY ZOHAR LAZAR



THE GREAT CAR BREAKDOWN

MEN ARE SUPPOSED TO LOVE EXPENSIVE SPORTS CARS. SO WHY DON'T THEY WANT THEM ANYMORE?

Mark Zuckerberg, a man worth \$33 billion, drives a Volkswagen GTI hatchback with a price tag of about \$30,000. The 30-year-old is no tightwad – he dropped \$100 million and change on a Hawaiian estate – but he does represent a new generation of young men who no longer view their set of wheels as a status symbol.

A 2012 study about Gen Y's automotive preferences found that fewer than half of those polled were impressed enough by someone else's luxury car to buy their own. And the interior feature the under-40s said they desired most was in-dash technology – not hot-stone-massage seats or hand-stitched leather. In 2013 an independent study by Zipcar and KRC Research found that 44 percent of 18- to 34-year-olds had made a conscious effort to replace driving with alternative transportation. The respondents also said that losing their computer or cell phone would have a more negative impact on their lives than losing their car.

"We've seen the end of the industrial economy requiring a sprawling landscape, with large homes spread out in the suburbs," says Richard Florida, author of *The Great Reset*. "Now, with the rise of the creative economy, the city represents the factory of our age. Bikes

and public transit are simply more convenient modes of getting around." As more young men do without cars, their symbols of success have changed from a flashy Ferrari or Lamborghini to more experiential markers of taste and lifestyle, such as eating a blogged-about dish at a hot restaurant or participating in adventure races such as Tough Mudder. The intersection of the recession and the rise of ride-sharing services Lyft and Uber has accelerated the situation. Cars are lackluster investments, losing value as soon as they're driven off the lot. If this generation is going to splurge on a pair of wheels, it will more likely be on a customized four-figure cruiser or racing bike than a car.

Photographer David Chen can afford a high-priced automobile, but he chooses to bop around his hometown of Seattle in a 2001 Toyota Corolla, price tag \$5,000. He spends more than that amount on camera equipment. "I consider myself a creator," he says. "A camera will facilitate that a lot more easily than a vehicle."

Owning a sports car used to be a way to show off to the neighbors, but social media have rewritten the metrics of achievement. A finely curated Facebook page or Instagram feed is often more prized than the vehicle a person drives. "And thousands more will see it," says Chen. – Matt McCue



SEE FOR YOUR SELFIE

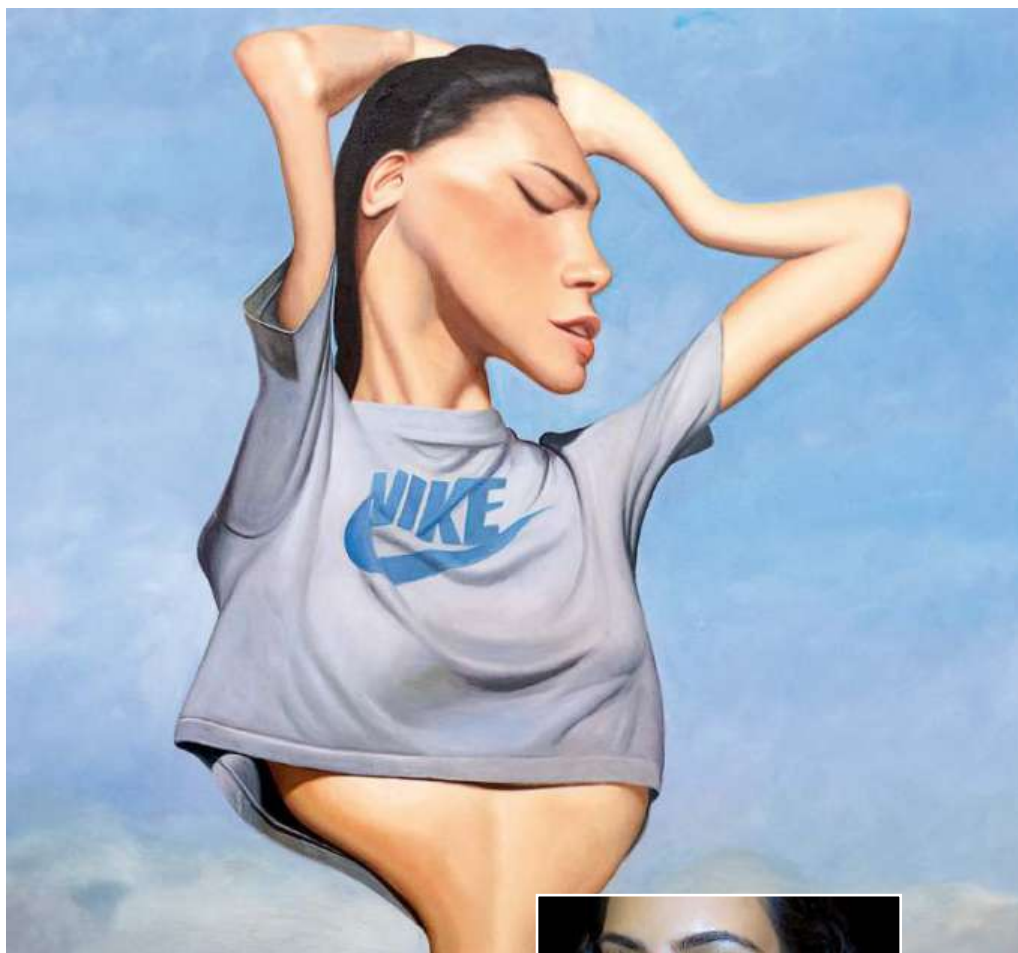
HOW MUCH IS YOUR SELFIE WORTH?
MEET THE PEOPLE CASHING IN

In January, Ryder Ripps, a 28-year-old conceptual artist in New York City, debuted an art exhibit devoted entirely to one woman's Instagram account. The exhibition, *Ho*, comprised reappropriated and manipulated images of Adrienne Ho, a fitness model who gets paid by Nike, Supreme and other major companies to post photos of herself wearing their gear. Her brand-influenced selfies, shared with more than 300,000 followers, are a "constant reflexive feedback loop of ego," says Ripps, whose show, which included the painting at right, was covered by press from the art world to *The New York Times*.

Together, Ripps and Ho (who had no involvement in Ripps's show and recently blocked him on Instagram) represent more than just a Warholian artist and his muse. They reflect a new movement in which artists, nonartists and corporations alike are capitalizing on – and commodifying – the banal ubiquity of selfies, turning them into not only fine art but also marketing tools and cold, hard cash.

"I was surprised by how quickly brands began to approach me to have their products showcased in my selfies," says Denelle Kennedy (below), a 26-year-old London photographer who exhibited a collection of selfies in Toronto last year. She describes the collection, titled *Celfie*, as a "deliberate overkill of Instagram clichés, calling attention to carefully considered yet seemingly spontaneous product placements and the ridiculousness of it all."

Ultimately, she refused to collaborate, saying sponsorship made her uncomfortable. "I was fascinated by their tactics to have me do the dirty work for them, sharing their brand and marketing it essentially for free,"



she says.

That's not to say Kennedy hasn't cashed in. She's sold some pieces for as much as \$3,000. "I don't think it's crazy that a selfie will sell in a traditional art context," she says. "To me the issue seems to be that it's readily available, so why pay for it?"

So what makes one selfie worth more than another? For starters, exposure. The world's most famous selfie – the snapshot Ellen DeGeneres took at the 2014 Oscars with 10 A-list actors – is, according to one advertising exec, worth \$800 million because of its virality, and that's not including the moolah Samsung paid to put its Galaxy smartphone in the host's hands.

Another factor is whether selfie takers position their photos as art. In 2013, the same year Oxford Dictionaries crowned selfie its word of the year, 19 artists in London sold video slide shows of their selfies for \$500 after a public exhibition. Last October, a group of performance artists took pictures of themselves in New York's Union Square for an hour and sold the shots to onlookers for \$25 a pop.

Could your selfie soon be hanging in a stranger's living room? Consider this: A photo Buzz Aldrin took of himself in space 48 years ago recently went to auction, marketed as "the first space selfie." Its sale price: \$9,200. – Shane Michael Singh



The Queen COLLECTED

→ You've probably already seen pretty much every inch of Kim Kardashian (what with her sex tape, reality show, and, of course, December 2007 PLAYBOY pictorial). Now you can get between the covers with her – hardcovers, that is. With more than 400 pages

of intimate snaps (including bikini selfies, lingerie selfies and, yes, nude selfies), flipping through *Selfish*, published by art-house giant Rizzoli (\$20), feels like scrolling through a well-curated smartphone. Too much Kim? Maybe there's no such thing. – Cat Auer



B

DTLA CONFIDENTIAL

THE DOWNTOWN LOS ANGELES RENAISSANCE HAS ARRIVED. HERE'S HOW TO DIVE INTO THE CITY'S HOTTEST NEIGHBORHOOD

• Until recently, if you asked most Angelenos about downtown they would say it was on the verge of a renaissance – or so they'd heard, because they hadn't actually been there in years. But thanks

to a steady influx of new hotels, flagship stores and A-plus food and drink, the neighborhood perpetually on the brink (now rebranded DTLA, of course) has finally crossed into happeningness.

1

The Coolest Crash Pad

• With palm trees and ocean breezes as competition, downtown has needed a stronger argument than "conveniently located only minutes away from the intersection of the 101, 110 and 5 freeways" to lure travelers to the city's urban center. Enter the Ace Hotel. Opened earlier this year inside the historic 13-story United Artists Building (A), the first L.A. outpost of the boutique chain

has it all: rooms smartly outfitted with modern comforts and retro details; day-into-night dining by way of L.A. Chapter (from the team behind Brooklyn's beloved Five Leaves and Nights and Weekends) on the ground floor; a rooftop bar that's jammed on weekends but breezy for a Friday afternoon beer. Old Hollywood's infatuation with Spanish Gothic vibes is evident in the epic theater, where movie nights, rock concerts and performances have made the venue must-do.

3

Reasons to Get Dressed

• Unlike L.A.'s beachier neighborhoods, downtown's un-flip-flop-friendly city streets have naturally attracted those who think outside the sweatpants. Follow Leonardo DiCaprio and Chris Pine to Apolis, a neighborhood-mainstay men's store and gallery space in the Arts District that sells gear

designed in L.A. but manufactured around the world in the name of "advocacy through industry." Buy Apolis's signature market bag before heading over to Swedish denizen of style Acne Studios. The ground-floor takeover of the Eastern Columbia Building, architect Claud Beelman's 1930 art deco exemplar, makes for Acne's largest store to date. The 5,000 square feet afford enough elbow room for men's and women's ready-to-wear, denim, bags, accessories and footwear, plus the satellite coffee shop of Stockholm's supercool Il Caffè.



D

C



2

Tour de Food

• From the city that brought America the food truck comes the next great experience in gluttony: Grand Central Market. The food hall has been in continual operation since 1917, but in the past two years it has seen food heavies and street-eats darlings set up shop under its roof, including organic-farm-to-butcher-shop Belcampo Meat Co. (feel good about adding jowl bacon to its famous burger); Eggslut (B), makers of mind-blowing (if not artery-clogging) breakfast sandwiches; and the neighborhood's first cheese-monger, DTLA Cheese. Around four p.m. it's time to act like a local and post up at Blue Bottle Coffee (C, D) in the Arts District for a New Orleans iced coffee. When this pioneer of the boutique bean came down from Oakland, it acquired hometown favorite Handsome Coffee Roasters, keeping the majority of the space, the roastery and all the employees intact. The only additions? Its logo and – finally – milk and sugar on the bar.



A

4

Night Moves

• In this neighborhood that insists on its beauty rest (depart cocktail bar by two a.m.; arrive at juice bar by eight a.m.), a new crop of restaurants, lounges and clubs is keeping revellers up past bedtime. Check opulent eating and drinking off your to-do list at Faith & Flower. The grand restaurant-bar's moniker comes from its street's current (Flower) and original (Faith) names, and the menu follows

suit with nods to culinary trends of the 1920s and today. Timelines aside, slugging oysters and littlenecks from the raw bar before devouring a bacon-wrapped tenderloin is timeless. Let a late-night dining high carry you to Honeycut, a subterranean bar worth the double dose of Advil. Stunningly crafted cocktails and a sweet 1970s fantasy color-blocked dance floor keep the space and the patrons well lit. It's L.A., so you're gonna see stars. – Crystal Meers

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Anja wears:
Shoes: Topshop, Socks:
DKNY, Garter: Victoria's
Secret, Bodysuit and
Panties: American
Apparel, Sunglasses:
H&M, Jewelry: Claire,
Primark, Forever 21, and
Absolute Vintage, Hat:
Photographer's own.

Acknowledgments:
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Canon Adria. Special
acknowledgment to New
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On the road
with

ANJA
JENKO

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ALEŠ BRAVNIČAR

For this dramatic series of photos, the stunning Slovenian Anja Jenko followed in the footsteps of infamous fictional TV characters, Walter White and Jesse Pinkman, across Oklahoma, Texas, and New Mexico as a tribute to one of the greatest pop culture shows which recently came to an end: *Breaking Bad*. Led by the talented photographer, Aleš Bravničar, the team covered 5,000km through places where no ordinary tourist would ever go. Route 66 will never be the same again.

Back home, Anja lives in Ljubljana and multitasks as an actress, dancer and model, but she's always ready for a new challenge. "It is important to be persistent and brave, to go away from mainstream rules, to find out by yourself what is good and what is right," she says. She believes strongly that everyone should have the chance "To live your own dreams." We're just glad she allowed us to share a small part of her world.





PHOTOGRAPHY: ALEŠ BRAVNIČAR WWW.BRAVNICAR.COM PHOTO ASSISTANT: ANDRAŽ BLAZNIK STYLING: INIA SAVSKU DIGITAL OPERATOR (CITY): CHRISTOPHER MURRAY FOR MIAMI DAYLIGHT STUDIOS

THE TEAM COVERED OVER 5,000KM
THROUGH PLACES NO
TOURIST WOULD GO
ROUTE 66 WILL NEVER BE THE SAME

















PLAYBOY

Advisor

SEND YOUR QUESTIONS TO ADVISOR@PLAYBOY.CO.ZA. WE'LL GET THE BEST IN THE FIELD TO GIVE YOU SOME GREAT ADVICE...

My girlfriend wants me to handcuff her during sex (yes, thanks to *Fifty Shades of Grey*)

but is afraid of being stuck in the cuffs should the lock release fail. Any suggestions on how I can convince her it's safe?

Her fears are not unfounded. When the book's popularity reached a peak, police and fire departments reported an increase in calls from couples who'd gotten in over their heads and needed emergency extraction. For around R150 you can buy officially branded *Fifty Shades* "You Are Mine" cuffs, which have a built-in safety release, or police-training cuffs, which are made of heavier metal and also have a release switch. For more serious restraint, the BDSM community recommends specially designed bondage cuffs made with larger leather straps that decrease the risk of nerve damage associated with traditional handcuffs.

What are you supposed to wear when you go to a big boxing match? When I watch fights on TV I see some guys in T-shirts while others are wearing really nice suits.

The closer you are to the ring, the better you should dress. In most seats, nobody will think you're disrespecting the event or yourself by wearing jeans and a hoodie. But if you're sitting on the floor or the first few risers, there's a good chance you'll end up on TV or on the big screens, and here more than in any other sport except tennis and golf you don't want to look like a slob. At the very least wear a nice polo or crisp collared shirt. A blazer wouldn't hurt. Look at all the boxers at the Manny Pacquiao – Floyd Mayweather fight: Mike Tyson, Sugar Ray Leonard and Oscar De La Hoya all wore blazers. Promoters can even get away with wearing a tuxedo.

I am a very sexual individual with a wonderful wife of more than 20 years. She has given me countless phenomenal blow jobs; if we could bottle and sell her technique, we would be millionaires. In addition to the incredible oral sex I get several times a week, we still regularly have intercourse – just not early in the day. I have never been able to convince her to experiment with morning sex, even though I always have enormous morning wood. How do I get her excited about sex in the A.M.?

Have you tried brushing your teeth first?

Lately I have been to a couple of restaurants that have communal coed sinks. Men and women use separate bathrooms but wash their hands at the same place. This inevitably means people

of both genders are waiting to use the same sink. I recently had to wait for a woman to touch up her makeup. Typically after urinating I don't feel compelled to wash up, but I was afraid the woman would judge me if I didn't. And she made me wait for the privilege. I'm not sure I'm into this much equality.

Equality is one thing. Equivalent bathroom behavior is another thing altogether. In a shared space, always, regardless of the genders involved, be on your best behavior. Just because you trust yourself and your hygiene doesn't mean every other guy in the men's room will wash up thoroughly. Not only are they potentially spreading their germs, you could be unwittingly bringing their fecal matter into your french fries when you go back to the table.

Hygiene aside, be patient and polite. Wash your hands, put the seat down after you go, don't primp your pompadour too much, and above all, don't do what a particularly tall and somewhat tipsy male friend of ours did when he mistook the communal sink for a urinal.

My wife and I have been together for about two decades and have always had a good sex life and a great marriage. Shortly after we married we got into gameplay and soft swinging with a couple we knew. Unfortunately, the couple we were swinging with separated. I still have fantasies about engaging in gameplay and possibly a threesome with the man from this couple and my wife; he's still a close friend of ours. Is this a good idea? Is it normal?

As much as we would all be comforted by the

notion of normalcy, there's no such thing. If you're asking whether what you're suggesting is commonly accepted in society, it depends entirely on what society you're part of. You are already part of the swinging culture, in which having sex in front of other men is statistically more common than in society at large. As for whether it's a good idea to have a threesome, of course it's okay if everyone is on board. You seem to be a liberal and freewheeling crew, so we can't see any harm in at least inquiring. Just be prepared for a yes or a no, and if both your wife and your friend go for it, be sure to lay out the ground rules and expectations ahead of time.

Recently, while I was at my boyfriend's house and he was cooking me dinner, I used his Facebook account to look at my page. When I went to type my name in the search field, his most recent searches appeared, and they were for three of his ex-girlfriends. I feel weird about this. Should I mention it or let it go? Of course I understand he's free to look at anyone's page, but if he's really content and happy with me, why would he be checking out his exes' updates?

If looking at the Facebook profiles of ex-girlfriends or boyfriends were a surefire indicator of the impending end of a relationship, we would all be alone.

There's nothing weird about being curious about how an ex is doing. Maybe he was tracking their weight gain. Or maybe he was tallying up his conquests. (We hate to break it to you, but even the most committed guys keep count.) Whatever the case, we'd say don't sweat it.



A good friend of mine was recently in a terrible accident that he barely survived. I've been visiting him in the hospital every week and have come to realize that I find just about every decent-looking nurse incredibly sexy. They're no hotter than women outside the hospital, and they wear chunky athletic shoes and baggy clothes, but there's just something about them and about being in that environment that makes me hornier than usual. Don't worry; I'm not going to hit on the nurses, but I am curious about your opinion. What's your take on this?

Your situation sounds different from the standard sexy-nurse cliché that thrives in certain porn subgenres and proliferates around Halloween. Maybe it's the baggy clothing that makes the nurses all the more tantalizing to you, like a sort of sartorial chastity belt in scrubs form. Or perhaps it has something to do with the fact that nurses take care of people in a somewhat motherly way that Freud would probably say you find arousing. But our leading theory is that, given your friend's circumstances, your reaction is really about your fear of death.

We think that on some primitive level you're responding to a situation in which your friend nearly died, which probably makes you viscerally aware of your own mortality. The primitive, evolutionary reaction to being threatened with death is to procreate, so you're seeing all these nurturing, fertile women as potential mates who could help you propagate the species and thereby give you eternal life – or at least pass along your DNA.

Then again, maybe the nurses are just sexy. 🍆



BIG BABIES

MEN ARE MADE OF STEEL. THEY'RE STRONG AND BRAVE, EXCEPT FOR ONE THING

I once worked for a boss with whom I had a really up-and-down relationship. He'd make us stay at the office sometimes until six o'clock in the morning, and during one of those marathon work nights he even accused me of being a mole for the government. I had a blanket and a makeshift voodoo doll of him in my desk drawer. I remember staring at him many times on those late nights, wishing he would just shut the hell up (and also button his shirt so I couldn't see his hairy stomach — which I could probably accurately describe to a police sketch artist if the belly ever committed a crime). My boss, though eccentric, was a genius and had a lot of good qualities, but a bad day was a really bad day. He could be loud and mean and scary and could verbally eviscerate you — except when he was sick. One day, when we first started working together, he got a stomachache and regressed into a complete and total superbaby. The whole staff was responsible for figuring out why he didn't feel well. Food poisoning? Stomach flu? Dairy? Gluten? Too much food? Not enough food? Too much alcohol? Not enough alcohol? Or a deeper problem. Abandonment issues? An overdue poop? The work ground to a halt while he and his hairy belly took a nap in the meeting room (and we all watched). But the key phrase is work ground to a halt.

When men get sick, it's a thing. I mean, women get sick too, but when men get sick, you know. You really know. Not to knock you guys, but you do have this amazing ability to be a rock in a lot of difficult situations (cockroach in the bathtub to cockroach in the ear), but when you pick

up a little virus on a cross-country flight, you'd just as soon skip your return flight and head directly into the nearest womb.

I remember being one of those wombs and taking care of an ex when he was sick. We were spending a weekend in Las Vegas together when he started to run a slight fever. He was tired but couldn't sleep. He had no appetite (sadly, we had to forgo the free casino buffet we'd lost so much money to earn). He was agitated and frustrated. I've been there; I get it. But then he started to whine nonstop. He became mean and was certainly unappreciative of my help (or the insane amount I paid for Tylenol in the casino store). I drove us home to Los Angeles and set him up on his couch. And that's when he became a superbaby. I covered him in blankets

(too few!). Took his temperature (too many times!). Fed him chicken noodle soup (too hot!). Put cold washcloths on his forehead (too cold!). Bought him Gatorade (grape? gross!). I called my mom to ask for her advice (privacy much?). And sat by his couch-side, watching his chest rise and fall while he had fever dreams (hello, creepy!). After a few long days, finally the moaning stopped. The fever broke. He started to act like himself again (thoughtful, appreciative, semi-interested in me). I got him into the shower. Put fresh clothes on him. Did his laundry. Then he was better. And thankfully stopped acting like a superbaby. He was the first boyfriend I really took care of like that but certainly not the last. I've seen men roll around on the floor. Cry. Wail. Moan. Act like nobody on the planet

had ever been sick before. But why? Why do the same men who are typically strong in life and in crises collapse under the weight of a tiny virus or bacterium?

I think the answer lies in the following nothing of a story. I once asked a guy friend to walk me to my car after hanging out at his place, and he said he couldn't because he was sick. And that was it. He couldn't because he was sick. And I understood. I wasn't mad at all; I just asked his roommate instead. But that's why I think you guys become superbabies.

From a very early age men are expected to be men. You're burdened with holding the door. Walking your sister to the bus stop. Giving up your seat. Getting a giant container of kitty litter off a high shelf at Costco for an

unappreciative cat lady. And sometimes it's nice not to have to worry about any of that. To just be taken care of. To whine that the remote is too far away. The TV is too close. The show you're watching turned out to be an infomercial. When you're sick, everything is simple. You just want to feel better. One goal. No obligations to anyone but yourself.

Sickness is permission to do exactly what you want, even if it's not the "right" thing. It's permission, for a brief moment, not to be appreciative of your girlfriend or her pricey Tylenol purchase. It's permission not to walk a friend to her car. And you know what? You earned it. Gripe, sob, super-fucking-baby it up. I'll just expect you to hold the door for me in seven to 10 days.

**BY
HILARY
WINSTON**



ILLUSTRATION BY BOB DOB



“I’m dressed for the occasion – whatever the occasion happens to be...!”

TEARDROPS

8

TRAMP STAMPS

REMEMBER WHEN TATTOOS WERE MANLY? HOW DID WOMEN TAKE OVER OUR INK?

Admittedly, the reason I don't have tattoos is fear. Not just of pain and regret but also of having to admit to strangers that I've never actually heard a Molly Hatchet song and just think their cover art is cool, largely due to playing a lot of Dungeons & Dragons.

But as with many decisions in my life – such as becoming a nerdy writer and then getting to work for PLAYBOY – my wimpy choice accidentally turned out to be manly. For I believe that very soon, tattoos will be solely for women.

Yes, Popeye's forearm anchors are cool. Sure, the MOM banner showed that 1950s thugs were so tough they could display their vulnerability. And I'll grant it's impressive that Andrew Jackson, the scariest president we've ever had, got a tomahawk etched on his inner thigh.

When I moved to New York City in 1993, tattoos were so underground that tattoo parlors were illegal – even though we were still allowed to smoke in restaurants and issue subprime mortgages. But once technology made tattoos detailed, colorful, artistic and tetanus-free, they lost their outlaw mystique, which happens to lots of badass stuff. Earrings were a sign of rugged male toughness back in the times of pirates and Michael Jordan. You can tell how girly tattoos are now by the fact that the two biggest tattooed celebrities are Angelina Jolie and David Beckham.

When the first butterfly landed on a woman's lower back, dude tattoos were doomed. Women slowly feminized all the body parts on which guys used to get artwork: first the ankles, then the feet, lower back, hips, legs, neck, behind the ears, pelvis, arms, chest and finally the inside of the bottom lip. The ribs – which have to be

the most painful place to get needled – are now where ladies display lines of poetry by Sylvia Plath that say some version of “My dad did this.”

The decline of the male tattoo started back when Jenna Jameson put the word heartbreaker on her ass. While three times as many men than women over the age of 65 have ink, nearly twice as many women than men under the age of 35 do. The Oxygen channel has two reality shows about tattoos. Several 2014 NBA rookies have no visible tattoos whatsoever.

There will be exceptions. Face tattoos will always skew male. No matter how fancy the font, tats that say “Fuck you” will be a guy thing. And criminals will continue to apply single-color prison tattoos homemade with soot and shampoo – but inmates are always pretty far behind on cultural trends, as evidenced by the fact that most of Tom's remaining friends on Myspace are doing life.

In the future, most tattoos will simply be a new form of jewelry, a slightly tougher version of body glitter. And a key tenet of masculinity is to avoid drawing attention to your looks. It's why tough jobs involve uniforms and why we feel oddly comfortable making fun of bodybuilders. Sure, there are historical anomalies: the 16th century codpiece, the 18th century wig, the 1970s gold necklace, that weird thing in 1994 when baseball players dyed the tips of their hair blond. But none of this dandifying lasts. Men revert to the laziest version of Don Draper that women will permit. Adam Levine's tattoos are basically a male push-up bra for his back, saying, “Please admire my lush, beautiful lats.”

Men shouldn't be so desperate to express themselves. Tattoos are a way of begging people to ask questions about what your ink

means so you can tell them it's too personal to talk about and then talk at length about your addiction/breakup/trip to Thailand anyway. That's why tattoos are written in dead languages, Roman numerals, glyphs and geographical coordinates – so no one can figure them out without asking. A tattoo is not only like a diary but a diary you leave lying around in an obvious place, like your arm. If a man wants to express himself, he should do it on someone else's body.

In the early 1990s, when the tattoo movement took off, most inked women were riot grrrls with nose piercings, short hair, little makeup, loud guitars and feminist beliefs. But once burlesque became popular again, stereotypical porn stars – long hair, lipstick, spray tans, fake breasts and transparent heels – became colorfully

sleeved. The last time a guy was on the cover of *Inked* by himself was November 2012 – despite the fact that the magazine also puts out a second title, called *Inked Girls*. Tattoos have become completely sexualized. It's not fair and it's not right, but part

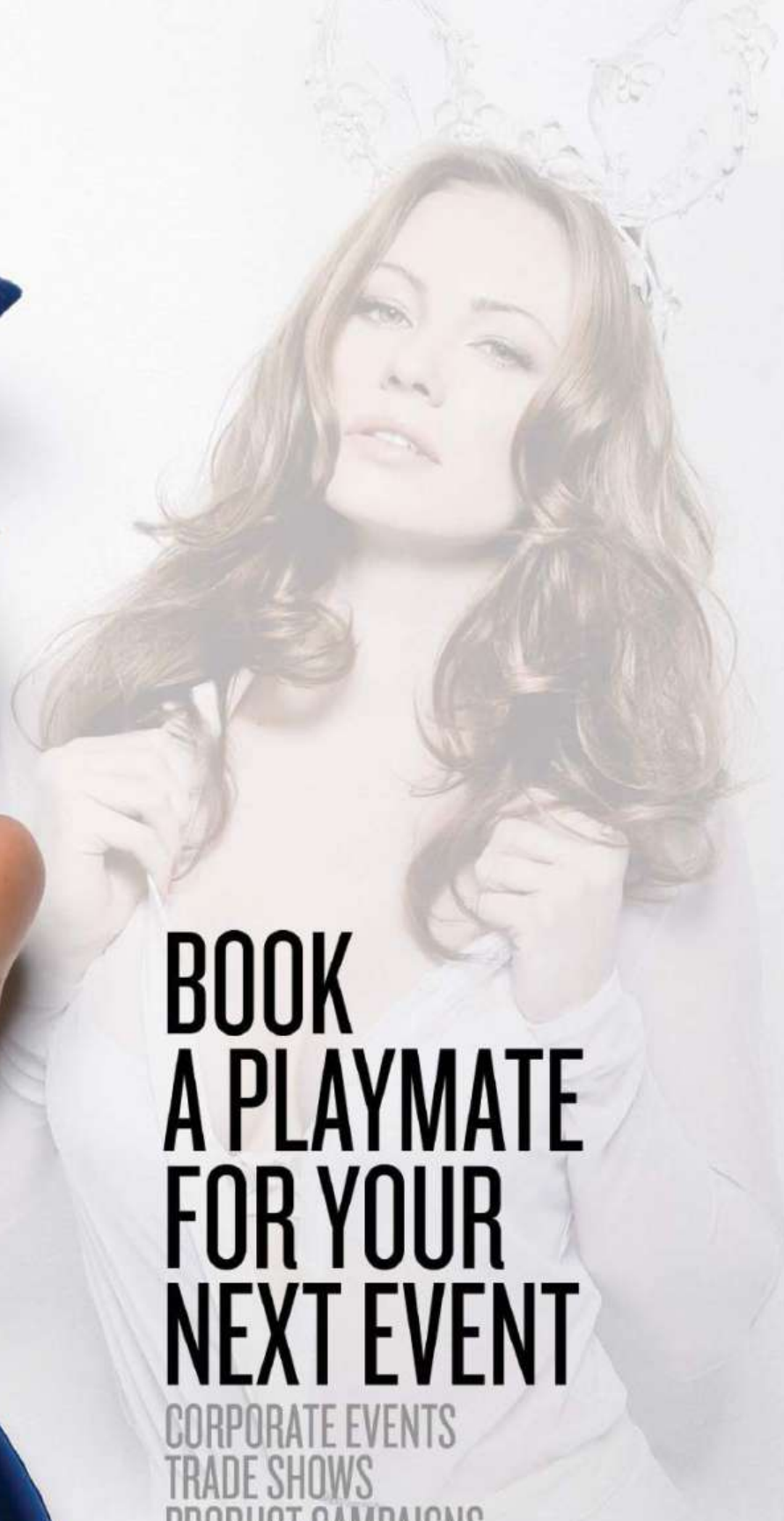
of the reason tattoos – along with stilettos, fake boobs, plucked eyebrows, waxed vaginas and clitoral piercings – are hot is that they mean a woman is willing to suffer to look sexy. Which means she probably does weird stuff in bed. As the comedian Richard Jeni explained, “I see a woman with a tattoo and I'm thinking, Okay, here's a gal who's capable of making a decision she'll regret in the future.”

The bad boy was replaced by the bad girl when power shifted to the nerds in hoodies. Now going on Vegas trips, getting wasted, screaming for an NFL team and having tats are the stuff of women's third through fifth Tinder photos. Instead of flowers and candy, the next generation will be giving women bail money.



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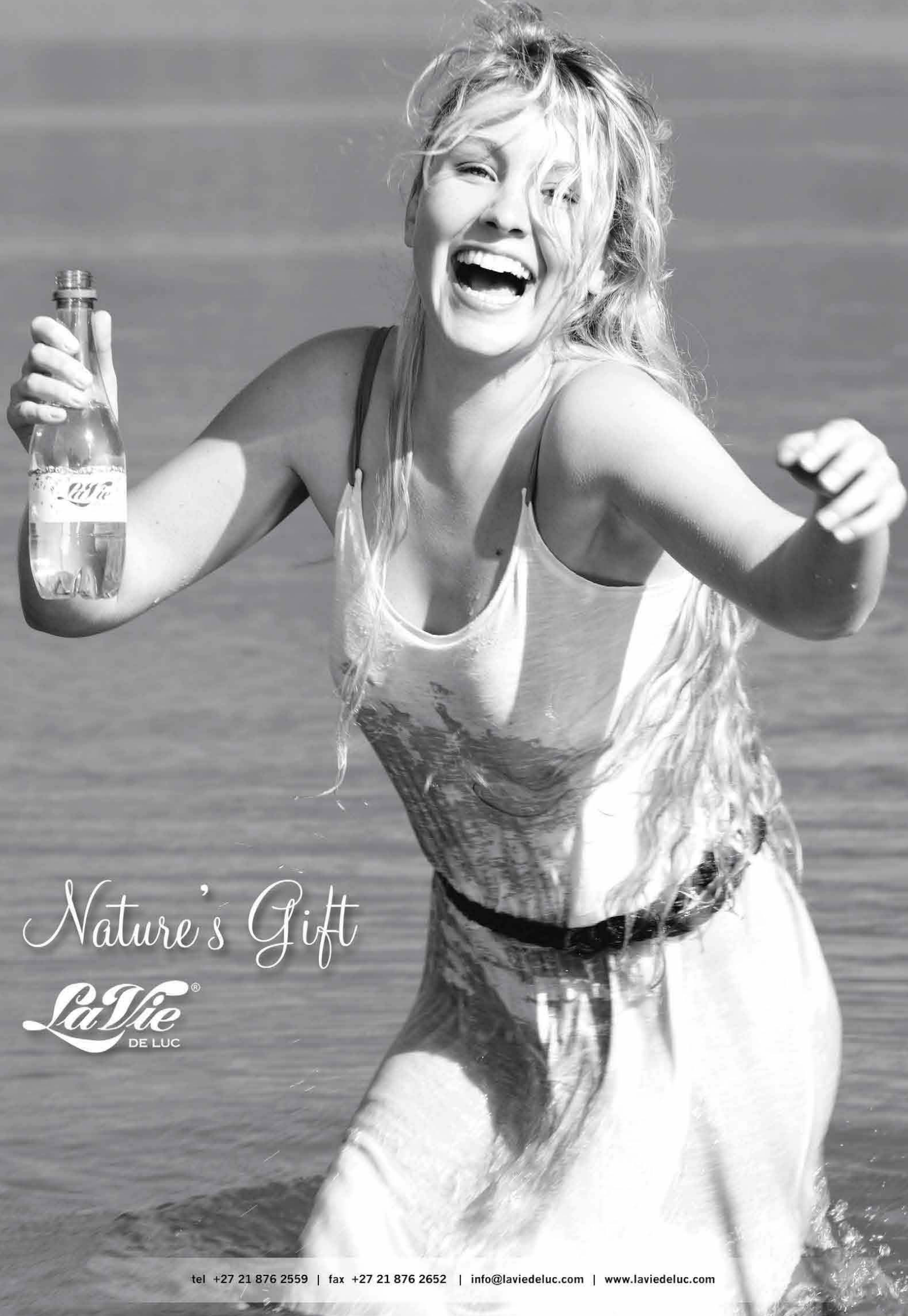


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